

DEDICATED

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to the Right Reverend
Dr. Manfred Björkqvist
Bishop of Stockholm

SCHOOL FOR LIFE

*A Study of the People's Colleges
in Sweden*

by

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PREFACE

Scandinavian countries have provided for theirs and such provision is an obvious and pressing need.

As we take our task in hand, it is natural to study the system of residential adult education in countries where it has passed the stage of experiment and become a settled and successful part of national life. That does not mean that we either should, or could, transplant foreign systems unchanged to British soil. But we can learn from them. There are books in English on the Danish People's Colleges;¹ but there are (so far as I know) no English books on adult education in Sweden, Norway and Finland, and this book gives the first detailed account in English of the important Swedish People's Colleges. Denmark is the parent of the movement and the Swedish colleges came into being in the sixties of the last century under Danish inspiration. But the Swedes adapted the Danish idea to their own circumstances and their system is instructive to us not only for its special features but because they have succeeded in reaching the industrial worker better than Danes, whose colleges cater mainly for the countryman.

Mrs. Evans probably knows more of the Swedish colleges than any native of this country. She went to Sweden in 1937 to study its secondary schools but became interested in its residential adult education and spent a year in visiting People's Colleges and familiarizing herself with their methods and organization. Her book shows her intimate knowledge of the details of the subject, and should be a practical guide as well as an inspiration.

R. W. LIVINGSTONE

¹ *Education for Life* by N. Davies; *The Folk High Schools of Denmark and the Development of a Farming Community* by Begtrup, and others (not now obtainable). Messrs. Faber and Faber have recently published *Folk High Schools of Denmark* by Christian Møller.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book is intended to fill a gap in our educational libraries by describing the history, external and internal organization and daily life of the Swedish Folkhögskolor, and to draw some conclusions upon their value to us, but still more is it intended to give the ordinary English man or woman an impression of how interesting, fascinating and inspiring adult education in a residential college for workers of all classes and status can be—‘skolan för livet’, a school for life where knowledge is related to living in such a way that the daily round and common task loses its flavour of drudgery and staleness and becomes purposeful and enthralling. It is written in the hope that the day will come when no longer will it be said as the writer heard a few weeks ago, ‘the happiest day of my life was the day I stopped going to school’ because school will be an opportunity to look forward to—a further chance ahead, as it now is in Sweden to many ordinary young men and women of any age who have missed the more specialized chance of a university or training college.

The term ‘folkhögskola’ has been translated as People’s College instead of the more usual People’s High School for two reasons: first, because, although the Swedish ‘hög’ means high and ‘skola’ means school, in Sweden ‘högskola’ usually denotes a training college or similar institution for pupils of a more advanced age (eighteen or over) than our English high schools; and secondly, because a Folkhögskola actually offers adult education to men and women generally over eighteen years of age, in a life which is usually residential, under a system where there is no examination and no compulsion, so that the term People’s College, though not exact, corresponds better than People’s High School and allows fewer possibilities of misinterpretation in the reader’s mind.

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Other Swedish terms are translated as nearly as possible the first time of use and then the English equivalent written thereafter. The Swedish exchange gave in 1937 approximately 19:50 kronor to the pound and for convenient reading a krona is translated as one shilling.

The book expands the material which the author used in an article published in *The Times Educational Supplement*, Saturday, 29 April 1939, and a more recent account, 'The Swedish People's High School' in *Adult Education*, the quarterly journal of the British Institute of Adult Education of March 1942. A modified and reduced form of Chapter IV has been accepted for the special October number of the *Journal of Education* of this year.

For some of the information contained in Chapter II the author is indebted to *Svenska Folkhögskolan 1868-1911*, compiled by the Teachers' Association of the Swedish People's Colleges (Sveriges Folkhögskolors Lärareförening).¹

My sincere thanks are due to Sir Richard Livingstone for reading the manuscript and making valuable suggestions; to Dr. Greta Hedin of Gothenburg, who in her travels in England early this year realized the need for such a book, and who has, since her return to Sweden, contributed the answers to certain questions bringing the material up to date; and to Miss Edith Ball of Cheltenham especially, and also to Mrs. C. Broms, who in the necessity for speed both came to the rescue and offered to ease the work of translation especially for Chapter II. I must myself take the responsibility for accuracy in translation of some of Chapter II and the great majority of the quotations from the *Svensk Författningsamlingar* and from the budgets, syllabuses and curricula of the individual Peoples' Colleges.

In conclusion, I am deeply indebted and grateful to Lanhövding Ricard Sandler, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1937, who offered me hospitality for a month during which

¹ This body edits a periodical, *Tidskrift för Svenska Folkhögskolar* (The Journal of the Swedish People's Colleges), and arranges regular conferences.

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time, from his own experience as previous Rektor (Principal) of Brunnsvik People's College and as Founder and President of the Swedish Workers' Educational Association, was able to give me an idea of the influence of both and the relations between them, as well as a perspective on the subject as a whole.

Many other acknowledgements should be made: to the then Swedish Minister of Church and Education, Artur Engberg; to Dr. Karl Kärre, Fru Borelius, and others of the Royal Board of Education in Stockholm, for recent statutes and statistics especially; and to the Principals and Staffs of all the Colleges I visited, as well as to those who have laboured patiently to improve my knowledge of their language.

Dr. Manfred Björkqvist's account of Sigtuna published by the Student Christian Movement press, *for private circulation* in 1936, and translated by S. van Engeströmfort, has also recalled to memory certain facts and points which he made in my three visits to Sigtuna. It was at Sigtuna Folkhögskola, and at his suggestion and inspiration that I first decided to make a study of the People's Colleges, and therefore to him it is dedicated.

F. MARGARET FORSTER
(Mrs. E. Evans)

Hellifield, 1943

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ADOLFO STELLA

CHAPTER I

A LITTLE-KNOWN EXPERIMENT

Those people who have read Chapter III, 'The Way Out', in Sir Richard Livingstone's *The Future in Education*, will already have a good general idea of the chief aims and features of residential adult education in schools or colleges founded for the purpose, especially in the form and shape it takes in Denmark. It is my task to give a detailed account of how such residential adult education is organized in Sweden for, though less well known to the English educationalist, the Swedish experiment of the last eighty years is in several respects more applicable to English life and development than the Danish.

'Here is that rare thing in education—an ideal embodied in fact. It is curious that it has excited comparatively little attention among ourselves who are facing the problem (that of educating the masses) which these Danish (and Swedish) schools have solved.'¹ It is an extraordinary thing that while the British Museum and the Bodleian can offer pamphlets and books innumerable on all sorts of educational experiments in other countries, applicable and non-applicable, there is nothing written in English on the People's High Schools of Sweden except a very short pamphlet published in 1904 in Örebro (Sweden) by J. V. Jonsson, which is naturally now very out of date. In 1937-8 the Swedish Principals of Folkhögskolor were themselves asking for a detailed historical and contemporary account, and many asked me to notify them if such an account were attempted. The present essay is the result of a year's study and travel in Sweden under the auspices of the Board of Education, which offered a studentship to the writer for the purpose of studying recent developments in secondary education in

¹ Sir R. Livingstone, *The Future in Education*, p. 44.

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Sweden, but was willing to allow a parallel study of the People's Colleges, when the writer discovered a greater interest in that aspect of Swedish education.

The whole study necessitated ease in reading and understanding the Swedish language, and this had to be made the chief work of the first three months. It was impossible, therefore, to visit every one of the sixty *Folkhögskolor* in Sweden, so some typical provincial colleges were chosen and some of those such as Sigtuna, Brunnsvik, Arvika, and Birkagården, which are unique. The war prevented the writer from returning to Sweden to complete the study and offer it in thesis form for a London Ph.D. degree in Education.

Generous facilities were afforded for the study of these colleges, of which the Swedes are naturally proud, and, in every case (except the non-residential Birkagården) hospitality for a few days was offered by the Principal. I was free to attend lectures, see any part of the colleges in action, talk with the students, examine scripts, records, timetables, syllabuses and budgets, and to discuss with the Principals and their staff, and of course, to join in all the celebrations as well as the daily routine. In a few cases I gave lectures myself and could test their understanding of English. Throughout the year I experienced—and am glad to put on record—the very real home life of the People's College, a home life wide and generous enough to take to itself a complete stranger of foreign extraction who might record criticism as well as appreciation of their work.

In view of the fact, therefore, that practically nothing is known about the Swedish experiment in England generally and that generous facilities for knowing were, in 1937-8, offered to me and that adult education is very much in the air, this account has been written. Contact with Sweden is possible still and attempts have been made to get the material up to date. As a policy of *status quo* has been observed in Sweden since the outbreak of the European war, no important new developments have been begun since my stay there. My hope after the war is over is to return to Sweden and enlarge this survey.

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The question may occur to some, Why is it necessary to know in detail the Swedish People's Colleges if we know already what obtains in the Danish? to which the answer is simple: that, in several respects the colleges of the two countries differ; that in some cases we in England can learn more from the Swedish than the Danish; and since the Swedish colleges are still free from Nazi interference, we can keep in contact with them.

In the early days of the Swedish experiment it used to be a matter of dispute as to how much the early Swedish Folkhögskolor, some twenty years younger than the Danish, owed in ideas and influence to the Danish. Some maintained with heat that, as many of the founders of early Swedish colleges had had no direct contact with Denmark and had never seen a Danish college in action, the scheme was not imported. The truth seems to be that the idea certainly came from the Danish leader, Grundtvig, and took root in men's minds in Sweden, but that the independent Swede developed it according to his own needs and the country's individual requirements. Certainly in Östergötland's college, where the connection was clear and acknowledged, Rektor Gödecke announced his intention of establishing the teaching method in 'a clear, Swedish spirit'. In Chapter III we shall see how some foundations had a definite link with Denmark, but for all that in early years the Swedes criticized the Danish colleges as 'seats of political agitation' and the Danes looked upon the Swedish ones as 'schools of book-keeping'. These differences have long been laid aside and since 1873 pupils and teachers have till recently been exchanged between the two countries' colleges, and regular Scandinavian conferences have been called since the first successful one in Stockholm in 1880. In particular Swedish teachers are to be found studying at Askov in Denmark which, with its more advanced courses, serves almost as a People's University and Teachers' Training College. There are no regular courses at the Swedish universities intended for future teachers in folkhögskola, though the Folkuniversitets Foréningen (People's University Society) is trying to establish some

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contact between these two forms of education for the adult, and this summer of 1943 saw a conference arranged to discuss that possibility. Those teachers from all over Scandinavia who attend courses at Askov are organized in the Askovs Nordiska Lärareförening (Askov Scandinavian Teachers' Association) which holds conferences. The last of these was at Sigtuna in 1938, and fifty members attended it.

The chief differences between the colleges of the two countries are, first, that the Danish ones owed their origin to two men, Grundtvig, the great religious leader, poet and teacher, who inspired the movement, and Christian Kold, the organizer. They have had therefore a more specifically religious intention, whereas the Swedish have, as will be shown, many influences and personalities to thank for their foundation and, while keeping clear in the foreground the aim of spiritual awakening and development, they have lost the advantages and also avoided the dangers attendant upon the domination of a great driving personality—the danger of imitation, stereotyping and formality.

A second difference is due to the political circumstances in the two countries at the time of initiating these educational experiments. The first Danish People's College was founded with the express purpose of developing and strengthening Danish culture and nationalism against the German menace in Schleswig, whereas the Swedes in the mid-nineteenth century were an especially homogeneous people, fairly safe from external menace and from internal disruption, and the nationalist note needed less to be sounded, though 'fosterlandskärlek' (love of the fatherland) is expressly to be strengthened and cherished in the Swedish colleges, too.

Then also the Danish People's Colleges have served more intentionally the agricultural sections of the community,¹ whereas the Swedish colleges, open to all, have a considerable number of artisan and industrial workers and a leaven here and there of

¹ In 1925-6 10 per cent of the total number of students were industrial workers. N. Davies, *Education for Life*, p. 192.

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professional and other persons. In Denmark, 'the town folk were as a whole impervious, but the peasantry were transformed,'¹ but in Sweden they have coped better with the town element and Brunnsvik Folkhögskola is a striking example of a college more than half recruited from the industrial population. Thus the Swedes have actually arrived nearer the aim that Grundtvig had from the beginning, namely, that of a 'free citizen-school'—they are truly *folkhögskolor*—colleges for the people.

Perhaps the Swedish experiment can partly answer the problem set by Sir Richard Livingstone: 'Conditions here and in Denmark are very different. Denmark is predominantly agricultural. England is industrial, and it is easier for a farmer or peasant to leave his work during the slack season than for a clerk or factory operative to throw up his job for five months and run the risk of losing it permanently . . . not only is the town-dweller more tied to his work than the countryman, but he has at his door cheap amusements which compete with the P.H.S. (People's Colleges), require no sacrifice and can be enjoyed without mental effort.'²

Then too the study of social science is much emphasized in the Swedish colleges, studied not now so much from an idealistic viewpoint, as was common in many countries before and immediately following the Great War, but realistically, to understand and to solve. These studies have roused many young people's interest and been a strong link between the People's Colleges and the various Youth organizations, both of a political and non-political kind. As Karl Hedlund points out, 'now more than ever before one understands that there is no royal road leading to improved conditions—what is needed is co-operation by all the powers which want better social conditions'.³ In Denmark, until recent years, it was otherwise. 'The

¹ Begtrup, Lund and Manniche, *The Folk High Schools of Denmark and the Development of a Farming Community*, p. 7.

² *The Future in Education*, p. 60.

³ K. Hedlund, *Den Svenska Folkhögskolan av Idag*.

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majority of our students', says Begtrup, 'take, unfortunately, very little interest in social problems; the Danish rural population live under very good social conditions, while the young people of the industrial classes, who are intensely absorbed with plans for social reconstruction, rarely attend the folk high-schools.'¹

There are also differences in administration. The relation of the Danish People's Colleges to the State is similar to the Swedish and consists of scholarships and grants-in-aid with the minimum of interference except Government inspection. But in the matter of the financial control and ownership of the colleges there is considerable difference. In 1925-6, 36 out of the 59 Danish colleges were owned by the individual Principals,² and occasionally a man of means has built one at his own expense. In Sweden practically all the colleges are under Boards of Governors, with County Council and State representatives, and generally a local association of subscribers has started them. Private ownership, with its advantage of freedom and its disadvantage of weak links with the locality, is unknown.³

In internal organization there are also differences. The Danish colleges, by common agreement in their national Association, have adopted a more or less uniform charge for their students, about 70 kronor a month for women and 80 for men inclusive; rather more than the usual Swedish charge, but the Danes have also an excellent scheme of modifying the fees towards the end of the course, thus lessening the danger of absenteeism or return to work before the end of the five months. The Danish winter courses are for men only, whereas in Sweden they are usually co-educational; all pupils in Danish People's Colleges must be over eighteen years of age whereas in Sweden women students are accepted as early as sixteen years old. More

¹ Begtrup, p. 127.

² Davies, pp. 136, 137.

³ In Sweden, apart from the fifty-nine State-aided Colleges, there are a few *folkhögskolor* which receive no grant and are owned by associations not formed for profit (*ideella föreningar*), chiefly religious communities.

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practical work is done in the Swedish colleges, especially in the courses arranged for women; the Danish have imported the Swedish system of gymnastics and an hour every day is devoted to that. Whereas the Danish colleges cater for almost equal numbers of men and women students, in Sweden the women have been in the majority since the beginning of this century.

The Danish colleges have been founded on a humanistic basis with the study of history and the mother tongue as the central subjects, and the study of natural science was not at first considered a medium for development, though it entered in later through the work of Professor Paul la Cour at Askov. Even then, however, science was treated historically rather than practically. The Swedish colleges, begun in a period when romanticism was not monopolizing attention so exclusively, and founded by essentially practical men, some of them landowners, some, like Dr. Leonard Holström at Hvilan, men of science themselves, have recognized from the beginning the value of the study of the sciences and they have naturally equipped themselves more thoroughly for these studies. History holds an important place too in the Swedish Folkhögskola, though less time is allotted to it, and it is studied perhaps more for its possibilities in the training of civic sense and responsibility, and for its value in the formation of standards of character, through the story of great personalities. 'Biographical sketches', wrote Johannes Boëthius, in an article on History Teaching in the People's Colleges, 'may become an influence among the young, filling their souls with longing after the noble, the great, and the beautiful.'

It must be conceded that the Danish colleges have had so far a greater influence upon their country's development than the Swedish, changing Denmark in a few decades from a poor and backward country into one of the most flourishing, up-to-date and democratic in Europe. There are more colleges in Denmark in proportion to the population, 57 for 3½ million, in comparison with 60 for 6½ million in Sweden, but the numbers of

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Swedish students are increasing year by year,¹ whereas the Danish have tended latterly to decrease, for in 1920-1 there were 7,245, in 1926-7 6,670, and in 1937-8 5,802 students. It still remains more true of Denmark than of Sweden that 'adult education penetrates the whole nation', and this is partly due to the fact that it had an earlier start, partly to its connection with Co-operation which has been in Denmark a particularly successful economic experiment, and also to the Danish colleges having spread their tentacles further into the countryside. This has been done through Lecture Associations, led by college members, all over the farthest and loneliest parts of the country, and through Youth Unions, which provide lectures and discussions as well as social meetings and amateur dramatics, and which cater for young people from fourteen to twenty-five years of age. These also are self-governing and generally led by old students of the People's Colleges, working on the lines they have learnt there. By 1927 there were some 50,000 members of Youth Unions and about 1,000 Lecture-associations with an average of 100 members each.'

There are many important similarities between the colleges of the countries, which will in the course of this book become evident to those who know the Danish experiment. Some of the chief among these are the importance attached in both countries to the 'living word' as the medium of teaching rather than books; to the concern of all with the drawing out of interest and appreciation rather than of a faculty for higher criticism; to the emphasis laid on the development of the individual alongside and never separate from his place as a member of a community; to the place of music and community singing; to the refusal to introduce tests or examinations and finally to the impetus given to the whole movement by the constitutional development in either country, in Denmark by the setting up of Provincial Advisory Councils in 1831, and in Sweden by the reform of the constitution in 1862 and 1866.

It will be seen from these remarks that the Swedish experi-

¹ Begtrup, p. 61.

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ment can offer more suggestions to us in England in our plans for residential adult education, because it has a much greater variety, both of foundation and of syllabus and curriculum, because it is more usually co-educational, and, most of all, because it has dealt more adequately with the problem of the industrial worker.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGES IN SWEDEN

The movement for People's Colleges began in Sweden some twenty years after it had taken root in Denmark and four years after the first Norwegian college had been founded. The original impulse seems to have come from Professor Christian Flor of Kiel University, who had himself left a profitable and influential post to fill that of Principal of the first Danish People's College at Rödding, so important did he consider this new departure in adult education. Christian Flor was responsible in Denmark for the growth of the Slesvigian Union and the furtherance of Danish national ideals. He was a personal friend of Grundtvig. At the Paris Exhibition in 1867, Flor (then a Cabinet Minister) met Dr. Sohlman, the editor of the Swedish daily paper, *Aftonbladet*, and a pupil of Erik Gustav Gejer, great historian and poet. Flor expressed his surprise at the lack of interest shown in Sweden (which he had visited in 1866) by peasant farmers and labourers in matters of state or in fact in anything outside their work and he expressed his opinion that only a common impending danger¹ or a very great enlightenment would awake them from their dull torpor. Dr. Sohlman was impressed and proceeded to use his paper for considerable propaganda in the cause of *folkhögskola*. He sent one of his sub-editors, Dr. Ålund, to Denmark, to study the Danish movement and write it up.

In his advocacy of the cause Sohlman maintained that in a small nation in an isolated position it was just as essential to develop the intellectual as the material resources. He had no

¹ Such as the war between Denmark and Germany over Schleswig-Holstein which had given impetus to the Danish People's Colleges.

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desire to create 'half-gentlemen' but 'clever and diligent peasants'. His advocacy coincided with the constitutional struggle for the Reform Law of 1862 and the new Parliamentary Constitution of 1866, which together form the basis of the present central and local government.¹ 'We must educate our masters' was an underlying feeling in Sweden as in England at the time. But the Swedes seem to have realized more acutely that it was the adult (still half-educated) who would exercise his vote for many years and before any result from the improved primary school education could be effective.

Many of the 'Intellectuals' of the period were greatly interested and strove, in speech and writing, to combat the idea held by some influential people, especially landowners like Greve Sparre, that higher education would make young people discontented with manual labour. Amongst the arguments used was one that the barbarians, whose only work was manual, were by no means the most peaceful and contented of people, and, another, that quite a lot of book-keeping and bookwork is needed to run a farm successfully and should relieve, rather than add to, the monotony of the work.

Västergötland and Skåne were the natural jumping-off grounds for the movement, being geographically nearest to the influence of Denmark, where the People's Colleges were already making a considerable impression on general life and especially on the agricultural revolution.

From the beginning the organization of the colleges has not been stereotyped. Some have been founded by local associations of guarantors on the individual initiative of one or two enthusiasts, others by the County Councils, and at the beginning a few even were privately owned. This is no longer the case and each college now has its Board of Governors, elected from various sources including generally some County Council and State representatives, which is responsible for the finance of the

¹ In 1862 County Councils were established. In 1866 the Four Estates—Nobles, Clergy, Burghers, and Yeomen farmers—were replaced by a bicameral Parliament with annual meetings.

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college, its staffing, and the allocation of scholarships.¹ The Principal has a very free hand in the working of the college and consequently full responsibility. From the first it was urged that religion was to be the foundation of the movement, daily prayers for all the members of a college and Church History and Bible Study are essential parts of the scheme, though attendance at prayers is not compulsory for any pupil, and it was urged that in the choice of suitable teachers the force of example must not be forgotten.

The institution of these colleges heralded a new era in education. Hitherto there had only been primary and grammar schools, people's libraries frequently run by the parish priest, workmen's institutes (more ambitious in programme but less well adapted to the needs of the average pupil), and a University Extension Movement operating mainly in the long summer vacation months. By degrees these other higher education movements linked up (though not necessarily in organization) with the People's Colleges and the energies of all were not dissipated by rivalry.

At the outset of the movement considerable qualms were felt about petitioning for State help in the fear that it would involve State control and spoil the characteristic independence and experimental features of the colleges. The County Councils were generally first approached but as these too were in their infancy and feeling their feet they were unable in many cases to do much more than show interest. Parliament was next petitioned and the response was by no means unanimous. The Upper Chamber took the view that State control must be a *sine qua non* for financial help and the Lower that the colleges should be autonomous. In the end a compromise, described in Chapter III, was reached. Considerable latitude is left to the colleges, and there are many ways of interpreting the few regulations promulgated, with the result that Sweden now has a great many types of *folkhögskolor*.

At first the People's Colleges had only the winter half-year

¹ See Chapter III.

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for their sessions, but this proved insufficient for a thorough course of instruction and in order to cater for those who would and could extend their study, second-year courses were arranged, in some cases a general course with emphasis on the social sciences and in others an agricultural course. Thus there came into being 'lantmannaskola' (agricultural school), sharing the same Principal and building as the People's College. In some places this latter arrangement proved unworkable and a better scheme seemed to be for a two-year course with the practical work in the intervening summer. Technical schools and independent agricultural schools grew thus out of the folkhögskola in the 'seventies and each benefited in the end from the creation of the other. Students now go frequently from a course at the People's College to a vocational technical or agricultural school.

Karl Hedlund, himself a teacher in a folkhögskola, in his pamphlet called *Den Svenska Folkhögskolan av Idag* (The Swedish People's College To-day), writes of three peak periods in the history of the movement. In the first, 1860-70, the 'breaking-through time', twenty-six colleges were founded. The further extension of the franchise in the first decade of this century and the consequent interest in everything connected with democratic government and education made the second peak period, 1900-10. In this time of awakening the foundation of Brunnsvik was significant, catering as it does for the industrial rather than the agricultural worker. (See Chapter V.) Hitherto the basis of this adult education movement had been the land and the peasantry, but now new people from other social groups come forward in the local associations behind the colleges, and youths from other work and other social classes come to the colleges as students. Youth unions, political and non-political, revived social work and study everywhere in the country. Holiday courses, arranged at the People's Colleges to coincide with the workers' holiday week, opened these colleges to young people in large numbers, who thereby got a taste for what could be offered there. The third peak period is 1930-40, when the

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general dislocation of trade and the economic uncertainty sent more unemployed students to the colleges. This period is also characterized by the increase in the number of women students, the setting up of better buildings, and the provision of more second-year courses and even of some third year. Twenty-seven new state-aided colleges were founded between 1900 and 1936, bringing the total number in that year up to 56.

We will now look at the story of the foundation of certain of the earlier colleges which will give weight to the previous general survey.

It was at Hvilan in Skåne that the first *folkhögskola* was founded. A committee was set up by the Agricultural Club in Bara and, led by Dr. Pehrsson-Bendz, a teacher at the Agricultural Institute at Alnarp, and roused and informed by the articles on Danish People's Colleges in *Aftonbladet*, proposed in January 1868 the founding of such a college in their district. Their lofty aims will be found on page 88 in Chapter IX, and the successful carrying out of them during the first forty years of the life of the college was largely due to Dr. Leonard Holström, the Principal. In 1874 the thatched hut on the road between Malmö and Lund, the first premises of the *folkhögskola*, was burnt down but a general appeal for building funds brought in about 20,000 kronor (£1,000). In 1894 a gymnasium, probably the first of its kind in the Swedish countryside, was built, and this was followed by more pupils' rooms and a dining-room. In 1873 a summer course for women and, in 1876, a second-year course had been added, and in 1887 the college was reorganized to qualify for recognition as an agricultural school and for this, in 1904, new classrooms and laboratories and pupils' rooms were erected.

Önnestads *Folkhögskola* in North-west Skåne was initiated by Sven Nilsson, through the influence of his Danish friend, Christian Nielsen. In 1868 a subscription was raised for its foundation and rooms were hired. Its high aim and spiritual purpose were not left in doubt: 'to awaken and develop in youth the dormant higher life, reflection, patriotism and bro-

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therhood . . . through the faith and fear of God, whose Word should illuminate all subject teaching and warm the hearts of the young as often as the opportunity is given'. Between 1878 and 1917 great building activity took place, beginning with a gymnasium. In 1877 a second-year course and in 1898 a summer course for women was started. In 1888 the College was re-organized with an agricultural department. It benefited by the legacy of ten thousand books, the private library of O. B. Olsson, a member of the Swedish Parliament.

When Hvilan's old hut was made into a college in 1868, the teacher in Ask's little elementary school came at once to the conclusion that it was just what he had always had in mind and had been feeling his way towards by continuation classes for his older children, built on to the elementary school foundation. This teacher's name was Hans Persson. In the autumn of 1873 he, at his own risk, founded a college to be called Fridhem. For the expenses he devoted 4,099 kronor 37 ore¹ (approximately £205 0s. 4½d.) of his own money. In difficult financial circumstances he bravely and enthusiastically carried on till 1893. In school affairs he was far too engrossed in the ultimate aim to be realistic about money matters: 'He was contented so long as he had just enough to keep his family on'. In 1893 by reason of illness he was unable to continue the work and the Board of Guarantors, chosen by some of Persson's friends, decided to move the college to Svalöv, taking over his school property and goodwill and reducing his financial responsibilities to an agreed sum. Persson died in 1898, but his foundation flourished.

Not all the early ventures were successful. Dr. Paijkull, elementary school inspector in Östergötland, died just at the time when his interest and enthusiasm for the new type of adult education had been roused, and on his death-bed he bade his wife carry out the project he had in mind. This resulted in the People's College for women at Samuelsberg, but after three years' work it had to close down for lack of money.

¹ *Svenska Folkhögskolan*, p. 128.

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The foundation of a college near Uppsala which could 'take advantage of the richer opportunities of teaching power and the scientific collections of every kind which the University could offer' was undertaken by the County Council in 1876.

Kronoberg County Council gave an example of provincial interest in 1876 by granting 20,000 kronor (£1,000) for the purchase of land and building at Grimslöv. Landshövding Gunnar Wennerberg, Chairman of the Council,¹ became Chairman of the Board of Governors of the new college. Grants from private sources and the neighbouring municipality amounted to 3,000 kronor for the first year.

Tjörn folkhögskola in Bohus province was one of two colleges which started with a large private donation. Lars Billström, a native of Tjörn, was a prominent Liberal M.P., devoted to his home and province, and this showed itself in gifts totalling 150,000 kronor (£75,000) towards the college founded in 1869. It is known generally as Billströmska folkhögskola, and is an independent institution, but it has followed the practice of colleges which are dependent on County Council or State support and has added special courses for women, an agricultural school, and second-year courses for men and women.

A good example of the influence of the local press in the early development of the colleges is provided by the beginnings of Tärna. In 1874 Västmanlands' county newspaper first proposed it and Dean Linder of Västerås, the Chairman of the County Council, and the Bishop were instrumental in starting it. Funds were subscribed by the County Council (20,000 kr.), the municipality and private persons. The County Council also installed a very expensive water supply. Tärna is interesting as an example of a foundation which has two distinct colleges, one for

¹ Landshövding is a State official appointed by and representing the Crown, and in this aspect resembles our Lord-Lieutenant, but as he has his office and presides over a County Council with administrative powers I have translated the term throughout as Chairman of the County Council. Obviously there is no exact parallel in England.

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men and the other for women. The usual practice is to make the colleges co-educational.

An example of a difficult County Council is given by Älvborg, in 1875. The question of higher education for adults passed through many vicissitudes and in three successive years proposals from different sources were set before the Council and rejected. Finally H. Spaak, who had a private agricultural school, took the risk of starting a People's College near Skeppsholm, and eventually got the support of the County Council in 1879.

Stockholm County Council also showed itself obdurate. A farmer, by name L. M. Carlsson, first stirred up interest in the matter but seeing that the County Council could not come to a decision he had to content himself with forming a committee. In spite of its hard work, propaganda and financial backing, the matter hung fire for five years, when, at the intervention of the Lord-Lieutenant, the necessary provincial support was given and a college founded at Hagby.

Seventy people subscribed 2,000 kronor (£100) towards the foundation of Hola. The initiative here came from J. Sandler (father of Ricard Sandler mentioned in Chapter V), and an evening-school association. In 1896 work was begun, but in 1898 the hired building was destroyed by fire. However, the determination of these early supporters was shown in the fact that, within ten weeks' time, two lecture-rooms and twenty-five living-rooms were ready. In 1903 an agricultural department was established but it closed in 1911, in pursuance of the policy described on page 25. A summer course for women and a second-year course were started and in 1913 the County Council took over the college.

Sunderby is interesting for its aim of 'furthering small-holding and colonization'. It is situated close to the north shore of the Baltic in Norrbotten. A staff officer, Colonel Melander, whose brother taught at Hvilan College, wrote a pamphlet in 1895, recommending the foundation of a folkhögskola for these northern parts. The Government supported him and the King

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promised to maintain a foundationer there. The chief fear was that no pupils would be forthcoming for little was known about the movement so far north. However, eleven Finnish-speaking pupils attended in the first year. A cookery course was established from the beginning. In 1897 a second-year course for men, in 1898 an agricultural course were added. The first buildings at Boden were burnt down and this was only one of the many early difficulties. The college has continued and still flourishes now in its latest home at Sunderby.

Matarengi, just south of the Arctic Circle and on the border of Finland and Sweden, had a similar aim to that of Sunderby, and reminds one of the foundation of Askov College, a Danish cultural venture, established just over the border of Schleswig at the close of the war which surrendered that province to Germany. The valley of the River Törne (the boundary), shut off and cut off from the rest of Sweden almost like a foreign land and populated largely by Finns and Lapps, struck Circuit Judge Krönlund as a likely place for the establishment of a People's College, 'to spread Swedish language and culture in our Finnish-speaking circles'. To this non-residential college at Matarengi had come by the time I visited Sweden even one or two Lapps, and it was hoped that the training given there would enable them to go back amongst their people and help to lift the level of a small but exceedingly primitive and backward people. An agricultural school is attached which gives a theoretical course in the winter and a four months summer course with practical instruction. There is also instruction in farming for women.

The individuality of the People's College in Sweden is demonstrated by the foundation of Eslöv, far more a vocational school than the generality. In 1897 a movement supported by a hundred and fifty persons 'to give instruction according to folkhögskola methods of working and teaching in scientific, mathematical and practical subjects' was set in motion by a graduate named Bobeck and the college was started in 1902 in hired premises.

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Birka in Jämtland, whose chief features are described in Chapter IV, was one of the colleges largely promoted by newspaper interest. In this case Editor Lindström, an ex-folkhögskola pupil, was the initiator. A proposal in 1893 in the County Council for a People's College for women only was turned down; in 1899 it reappeared in the new guise of a co-educational college. An appeal was made to the municipalities throughout the province for subscriptions, and twenty of them responded. A County Council grant was added to the sum subscribed for five years and the college was started in 1901. The buildings at Birka, lecture-rooms, boarding-house, and Principal's house, cost 70,000 kronor (£3,500).

The gift of a large farm by Miss Strömstedt, together with a voluntary levy of one öre for three years from the inhabitants of the province and a County Council grant and guarantee, made possible the foundation of Skogsby in Öland.

The Order of Good Templars in Sweden (Sveriges Nationalgodtemplare), a temperance movement, was responsible for the foundation of Vendelsberg near Gothenburg. It has a particularly fine building surrounded by parkland. Begun in 1908 on a basis of total abstinence it remained however 'öppen för alla, även för icke absolutister' (open to all even those who are not total abstainers). Its aim is explicit, to work on an ordinary folkhögskola basis for 'a sound manner of living in accordance with nature's laws, free from harmful pleasures such as spirit-drinking, smoking, etc.' There is a course for women and an agricultural school as well.

Kopparberg's County Council got information regarding the working of a great number of Danish and Norwegian as well as Swedish colleges before starting to build two new folkhögskolor in the province, one of which was situated at Malung, in 1906, and the other, Tomelilla, had a museum attached to it for the locality.

Hampnäs is one of the two colleges (the other being Sigtuna, described in Chapter VI), which owe their inspiration to the Young Church Movement, and especially to Manfred Björk-

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qvist, who aimed at a Church college on 'a Christian and national foundation'. The Young Church Movement developed from 1908 within the Swedish Student Christian Movement, and its most striking manifestation were the 'crusades' from 1908 to 1911, when young students went out, two by two, through the length of Sweden preaching and witnessing and working in the parishes and alongside the parish clergy, trying to bring the Church into closer contact with the popular movements of the day. On the crest of this wave came the creation of Hampnäs. C. J. Öberg, an ex-folkhögskola pupil, and by then a Member of Parliament, gave support to the appeal, and private donations, including one of 10,000 kronor (£500) from Frans Kempe, enabled a start to be made in 1910. In 1912 53,000 kronor (£2,650) were granted by the County Council for new buildings. Manfred Björkqvist was first Principal from 1910 to 1913.

South of Stockholm in 1885 an attempt was made to found a college by A. Källström on his own account. The aim of this college was to build up a great united family 'as in Denmark and Norway' on a healthy Christian basis, at a place near to the capital where those who were unemployed or suffering from short winter time and pay, so that it was no longer profitable for them to stay in the capital, could go through a course at the college, where the cost of living was to be as little as eight öre (about 9d.) a day. It was expressly stated that the college should be a 'folkhögskola ej en bondehögskola', a people's college, not a peasant college, as some of the early foundations (and most of the Danish) had been. This excellent plan never succeeded. There is now in Stockholm itself the non-residential college of Birkagården described in Chapter VIII.

Mora People's College, in Dalarna, was the work and special pride of Anders Zorn, the artist. He made an appeal, signed by the chairman of the County Council, for a college which should influence the mind and will of young people, work against crudity and bad morals, and forward temperance, thrift, enterprise and efficiency, so that the students from the college should

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return to their homes with ennobled minds and with strong intention to build up good homes themselves and to be of service to their village and neighbourhood. An exhibition of Zorn's pictures in Stockholm brought in 5,000 kronor, and with other donations and a County Council grant and the loan of buildings by Mora, the college started work in 1907. In 1909 new buildings were made possible and additional space for the agricultural school which was joined to the People's College.

From these descriptions of some of the older foundations (which are the more interesting because they began in an atmosphere of trial and experiment and often in the teeth of opposition) it might sound as if the initial stages of a *folkhögskola* were fairly smooth and easy. That was not so. When one considers the small original grants and the large responsibilities undertaken, the difficulties of building and the constant danger of fire in the wooden building (usual in the Swedish countryside), one can read between the lines the courage and faith of the founders. A tribute too should be paid to the early teachers, who for very inadequate pay and with a very uncertain future ahead of them, undertook their work with a real sense of the value of it. It is interesting to note that the question of State payment of the teachers' pensions was considered a necessity long before the State payment of their salaries was even mooted. At first these pension allowances were to be in proportion to the sum raised locally by fees but this was found to bear harshly and unfairly on the smaller schools. In the third general committee meeting of the national movement in 1881 the last item on the agenda was 'what can be done to ensure a safer future for the teaching staff in their old age'. This speaks for itself. In 1907 State pensions for all teachers were passed by Parliament.

It is interesting to note that it was very rarely considered possible by the early initiators that pupils would not be forthcoming; in other words the need was there and the experiment was justified. But it was not all smooth running. In some cases there were bitter disputes over type and method, such as that

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which split the college at Skeppsholm, so that two institutions existed in one neighbourhood and energy was dissipated.¹

Freedom from central control has allowed the development of certain colleges on very individual lines, and there is a wide choice for interested students to-day. One with a bias towards physical culture will choose Lilsved, another with musical ability will no doubt go to Ingesund College at Arvika, but the majority of students naturally gravitate to the college of their own province, and these provincial ventures, free of the excessive bureaucratic centralization of all other educational fields, have been eminently successful.

The popularity of the movement and its steady and continuing development can be seen in the following statistics, supplied by the Royal Board of Education in Stockholm:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Men students</i>	<i>Women students</i>	<i>Number of colleges</i>
1876-80	561	46	25
1916-20	1,457	1,669	{ Number increased from 26 to 50 in these post-war years
1928-30	1,464	2,248	
1931-3	2,411	3,071	54
1934	2,686	3,293	increasing
1935	2,541	3,419	to
1936	2,379	3,508	59
1942-3	2,000	4,200	59 State-aided besides some others which do not qualify for State grants

¹ The local County Council had three times refused support for a People's College in this area, so in 1879 H. Spaak decided at his own risk to start one at Skeppsholm. In 1882 A. Alström succeeded him as Rektor and moved the college to Fennelunda. Spaak soon changed his mind and reopened the college at Skeppsholm, but Alström refused to give up his activities at Fennelunda and struggled on under rather difficult circumstances. A good deal of wrangling ensued and little good work was done until a new foundation, backed by an association of friends, was begun in 1895 by S. Welin, in a rented mission hut.

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Further evidence of development and expansion is shown in the increased State grants. Whereas in the 'thirties the average annual State grant to the colleges amounted to some 1,000,000 kronor and to bursaries some 300,000 kronor,¹ in 1943-4 the figures were 2,280,000 kronor and 700,000 kronor respectively.²

¹ Figures quoted from Nils Bosson's lecture on the Swedish Folk High School delivered to the World Conference on New Education at Elsinore, 1933.

² Statistics furnished by the Royal Board of Education.

CHAPTER III

THE EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLEGES

Four years after the foundation of the first Swedish People's College the State granted financial help (1872) to the colleges then in existence, and until 1912 this brought with it no State control. Now, however, there is a special inspector for the colleges,¹ and all are required to conform to the few regulations set out in the Svenska Författningsamlingar of 1919, 1926 and 1928, 1934, 1938 and 1942.

These statutes lay down the aim and purpose of the colleges, a general curriculum, the conditions for admission of pupils and for the award of bursaries to them, the personnel and work of the governing bodies, the qualifications of the teaching staffs, their pay and pensions, and a few minimum requirements regarding accommodation, upon which are conditional the grants specified for the courses.

According to the Svensk Författningsamling Nos. 864-6, 1919,² the aim and purpose of the People's College is 'to give the young adult general and civic training in which special emphasis is to be laid on such instruction as will awaken independent thought and action and make the pupils acquainted with their native district and country, its historical development and present social conditions, its spiritual and material resources. It should also as far as possible give such instruction in practical subjects and accomplishments as may further the pupil's capacity for his trade or profession.'

The regulations state that in the first year's course a certain number of subjects are obligatory, namely, Swedish with Swedish literature, history and sociology, geography, mathematics, natural science, hygiene, singing and gymnastics, and,

¹ An ex-principal of a folkhögskola. ² Restated in 802/1942.

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in addition, book-keeping and drawing for men, handwork and some domestic science courses for women. Nothing is fixed in regard to the syllabus or methods of teaching. It is suggested, however, that the teaching should 'give the pupils such an awakening and insight as will forward their personal development and give them a living apprehension of their responsibility as men and as members of a community. It should also give them aspiration for more knowledge, showing them how to acquire such knowledge and such practical skill as will ensure increased efficiency in their life-work.' Stress is laid in the regulations, 1919, No. 866 and 1942, No. 802 on the need for independent work and the value of close contact between teacher and pupil and on the creation of a home atmosphere in the college.

Courses may be for men and women, jointly or separately, but the length of the terms is prescribed—for the main course at least 21–24 weeks, for independent women's courses at least 13–16 weeks, with three days' holiday at Easter, and two free days at Whitsuntide and at Midsummer. The minimum total teaching hours in the first-year course is fixed at 30 hours a week and in the second-year 24 hours. In special cases, such as work on the land, the course may be shortened with the approval of the central education authorities. The College Board of Governors is to decide upon action in the case of epidemics.

The governing body is to consist of at least five people and the Principal of the College is to be secretary to the Board of Governors. The College doctor has the right to take part in discussions relating to his department. The work of the governors is to 'keep a careful watch on the college and to advance its influence'. In accordance with the regulations it shall appoint and dismiss the Principal and members of the staff, fill temporary vacancies in the staff, at the suggestion of the Principal admit pupils and if it be deemed necessary expel pupils from the college, award scholarships on the proposition of the teaching body, draw up annual accounts and settle the

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curriculum and organization. The chairman of the governors shall through contact with the college and observation of its teaching, learn its needs and understand its work.

The minimum age for men students is eighteen years and for women sixteen, and the standard of entry for the first year is the elementary school and for the second year the first-year course or its equivalent.

Principalships and teaching appointments are to be open equally to men or women. The regulations lay stress upon suitability of character and age. It is now required that teachers of theoretical subjects shall have at least the university degree of *Fil.Mag.* (*filosofie magister*), about the equivalent of a Scottish M.A.

Of the total 314 teachers of theoretical subjects in 1939 about 65 per cent held degrees in philosophy, 4 per cent in theology, 15 per cent in agriculture; approximately 2 per cent had passed through the higher training college course for women teachers and 4 per cent were certificated elementary-school teachers. The statistics for the same year show that out of the total number of teachers of all subjects—some 501 in all—40 per cent held degrees in arts or science, 3 per cent in theology and, of the rest, some 14 per cent were certificated teachers of needle-work and weaving, 10 per cent of domestic science, 4 per cent of gymnastics and 2 per cent of music.

Annual state subsidies are given to the colleges partly as fixed grants or as supplementary grants determined by the number of pupils, partly as increment to the teachers for years of service, cost of living bonus, and so forth. These grants are conditional upon the regulations being observed and entail the right of inspection: they are awarded only to colleges which are doing work which is generally educative and not solely vocational. The scale of grants towards the courses of instruction has by the recent statute 801/1942, been raised from 7,000 kronor¹ to 10,000 (£500) for the chief winter course, with an

¹ The lower figures are those which were fixed by statute in 1919 and were in force till 1942.

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additional 4,000 instead of 3,500 if it is open to women as well as men, and 4,000 in place of 3,500 for the separate women's course. For the second year 4,000 kronor (£200) is granted instead of the previous 2,500 and the 750–1,000 kronor grant for parallel courses has been raised to 1,000–1,500. There are special grants given for teaching household economy. The government grant as a general rule largely covers the salaries of teachers. A college with an eight-month course can count upon a state grant of from 30,000 kronor (£1,500) up to 45,000 kronor (£2,250) in cases where a second year is offered and the number of pupils is larger. In 1943–4 the total grant from the State to the colleges amounted to 2,270,000 kronor (£114,000) in addition to the 700,000 kronor (£35,000) allotted for bursaries to students. A number of the colleges depend upon County Council grants varying generally from about 10,000 to 25,000 kronor (£500–£1,250) to meet the cost of repairs, cleaning, heating, and light, stationery and printing. Some County Councils (as seen in Chapter III) own the premises or make extra grants towards new buildings.¹ As will be seen from the budgets quoted at the end of this chapter, the pupil's fees, which are kept as low as possible, do little to relieve the financial burden of the colleges.

The original minimum scale of payment for the teaching staff of a People's College was laid down in the *Svensk Författningsamling*, 1919. Teachers of these colleges 'unless His Majesty's Government consider that special circumstances call for a different arrangement' received salaries on a scale varying from 5,400 kronor (£270) for the male principal of a college with a main course and an independent course for women, to 3,700 kronor (£185) for a male subject teacher in such a college. Women rektors and teachers earned comparatively less as also did those who taught in colleges offering only the main course

¹ 'One reason why the Folk High Schools get so much support from the County Councils and Parliament is that many of their members have attended a Folk High School as young men.' Nils Bosson in his lecture at Elsinore.

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or only the women's course. Temporary teachers¹ were paid between 1,700 and 1,900 kronor (£85-£95) for the chief course, handwork teachers approximately 2s. 6d. an hour, teachers of gymnastics 3s. 6d. an hour and domestic science teachers 10s. for the day's work.

Besides the salary, those subject teachers who had a permanent appointment were entitled to a house or flat rent free (with fuel) varying in size from at least five living-rooms for a principal to two rooms for teachers who did not keep house for themselves.

Although to these minimum salaries a cost of living bonus of 31 per cent was later added, and a system of increments of 500 kronor after 5, 10 and 15 years' service was established, and although it was possible for any college to pay a higher rate of salary, it remained a striking feature that until the new regulations of October 1942, the teachers in these colleges were generally worse off than their colleagues in elementary and secondary schools.² These recent regulations provide the following scale of minimum salaries (fractions of the krona are omitted):

Principal of a college:

with a main and a women's course	7,560 kr. (£378)
with a main course only	6,420 kr. (£321)
with increments of 480 kronor after 3, 6, and 9 years' service.	

¹ 'Extra ordinarie' has been translated by 'temporary'. Every teacher in Sweden starts as an extra ordinarie and then sooner or later he is promoted to 'ordinarie'. An extra ordinarie can be dismissed but not an ordinarie. In the secondary schools you cannot reach permanent status without provår, i.e. the year's training for teaching. In the People's Colleges there is no compulsory training, and so that difference does not count.

² From July 1929 a temporary scale of higher salaries was required by statute.

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Subject teachers with a permanent appointment:

where a main and a women's course is offered	5,280 kr. (£264)
with a main course of at least 24 weeks' duration	4,800 kr. (£240)
with a main course of less than 24 weeks' duration	4,200 kr. (£210)
with increments of 480 kronor after 3, 6 and 9 years' service.	

Temporary teachers or a locum-tenens working full time (i.e. at least twenty-four hours a week):

where a main course of at least 24 weeks is offered	3,360 kr. (£168)
where a main course of less than 24 weeks is offered	2,940 kr. (£147)
with two increments of 294 kronor after 3 and 6 years' service.	

A locum-tenens principal gets an additional 720–900 kronor according to the type of college.

Teachers of gymnastics, household economy and handwork receive remuneration with a cost of living bonus added according to the 1919 regulations instanced above. Regulations in regard to the provision of a house or flat, rent free with fuel, remain as before, except that, where there is no suitable dwelling (as may happen in the country) the sum allowed for compensation to a principal is raised from 800 to 1,200 kronor, permanent subject teachers are to be allowed 900 kronor, and temporary teachers 500 kronor, and those who do not housekeep 300 to 500 kronor, according to their status.

It will be noted that the new regulations not only considerably raise the scale of salaries but also accept the premiss of equal pay for men and women doing the same job.

Pensions are paid by a special authority called Statens Pensionsanstalt (The State Pension Department). The following scale of the amounts of deductions from salaries for pensions and of pensions awarded is that which came into force in October 1942.

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	Total/ service pension	Yearly contributions towards pensions		Total kronor 800 (£40)
		from Employer	from Teacher	
Principal of a college with a main and a women's course of a college with only a main course	6,000 (£300) 6,000 5,305 (£265) 5,305	kronor 400 (£20) 400 354 (£17. 14s.) 354	kronor 400 (£20) 213 (£16. 10s.) 358 (£17. 18s.) 188 (£9. 8s.)	kronor 800 (£40) 613 712 542
Permanent subject teachers of a college with a main and a women's course with only a main course of at least 24 weeks' duration with only a main course of less than 24 weeks' duration	4,860 4,860 4,536 4,536 4,131 4,131	male female male female male female	324 324 302 302 275 275	332 173 312 162 288 147
Temporary teachers giving full time service (i.e. at least 24 hours a week) of a college with a main course of at least 24 weeks' duration with a main course of less than 24 weeks' duration	2,665 2,665 2,381 (£119) 2,381	male female male female	178 178 159 (£7. 18s.) 159	200 96 183 (£9. 2s.) 86

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The State also gives financial help in the form of bursaries to students who need them. According to the Statute 399, June 1934 and its alteration 335, June 1938, applications for bursaries are considered by the Board of Education, which requires a signed and attested statement of the full financial circumstances of the applicant and his parents. The students considered to be in need of help are entered in one of three necessity grades (behövs grader). To each college is then assigned a certain amount of money to be distributed among those pupils whom the Board consider in need of assistance and who have deserved the highest testimonial for conduct and diligence. The distribution remains in the hands of the Principal and Staff of each college and the amount of help given has been raised to 45 kronor (£2. 2s. 6d.) for the third grade, 25 kronor (£1. 2s. 6d.) for the second and 15 kronor for the first. Bursaries are also awarded by many of the County Councils, several private bodies and the colleges themselves, with the result that many students can attend the courses for a very small cost.¹

Such are the links which bind the People's Colleges to the Board of Education, and practically entire freedom is left to the colleges in matters of internal organization, details of the curriculum, internal life and discipline, methods of teaching and standards proposed and obtained.

But the colleges have also external links with the province in which they are situated—a financial bond for the most part.

¹ For example, at Hola College, 1934–5, 22,275 kronor (£1,114) was distributed as bursaries: 123 students held State bursaries totalling 18,485; 46 had smaller grants from Hola's Students' Union totalling 900 kronor; 4 shared the 105 kronor from the founder's J. Sandler's Bursary Fund; 25 had grants of 5 to 50 kronor from the Central Committee of the Church for aid to the unemployed; 2 had 100 each from the County Council; 4 had 50 each from the Union of Sawmill Workers; 9 had between 75 and 125 kronor each from Ytterlännäs municipality, and 14 had from 25 to 100 from Gudmundrå's Elementary School Board.

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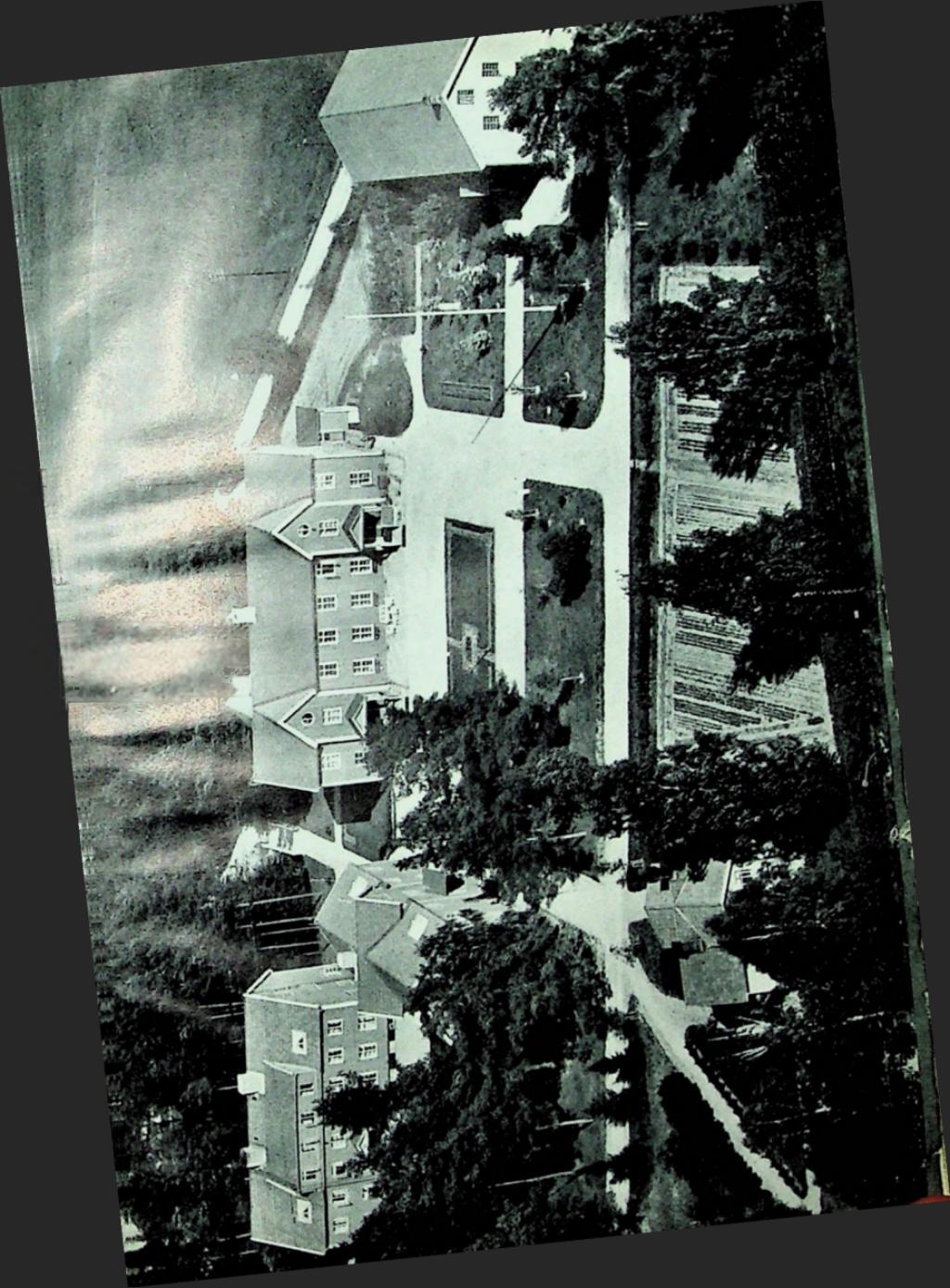
Many of the County Councils give regular annual grants¹ to the schools as exemplified in the budget quoted at the end of this chapter where Hola Folkhögskola is granted 8,000 kronor (£400) by Södra Ångermanland's Council, plus a cost of living bonus (dyrtidstillägg) of 5,000 kronor (£250) and an extra grant to cover a previous deficit of over 2,000 kronor. In some cases grants are given by the County Councils towards the maintenance of the property of the local folkhögskola, in some cases the County Council owns the property and buildings. Some Councils give financial assistance to their own students studying at the college and in this respect Stockholm is particularly generous. The County Councils are represented on the governing bodies in such aided colleges.

The rest of the financial burden is met by grants from the neighbouring municipalities, the pupils' fees, private benefactions, the Co-operative Society, the Swedish Workers' Educational Association (Arbetaresbildnings förbund), religious associations, trades unions and others, according to the college's particular bent and bias.

In certain cases a considerable amount of money has come to the colleges by means of lotteries. In Sweden it is usual to have Government-controlled lotteries for public institutions or buildings—the Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm was largely financed in this way. An example of a college being allowed to extend its activity by these means is Birka in Jämtland.

To conclude we quote examples from the budgets of two colleges, that of Hola in Södra Ångermanland (Middle Sweden) and that of Hampnäs in Norra Ångermanland. They are typical budgets of Colleges which are not especially well endowed or so much in the public eye as Sigtuna and Brunnsvik. It should be remembered that, in 1935-6, the exchange gave approximately 19.25 kronor for the English pound.

¹ These grants meet current expenses such as fuel, light, cleaning, printing, repairs, etc. The total annual grants from the County Councils average about 1,200,000 (£60,000), not including extra grants for new buildings.



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SCHOOL ACCOUNTS

(a) Södra Ångermanlands P.H.S. at Hola. Extract from Accounts for 1936:

	Income	kronor
State grant towards courses		35,479:69
Provincial grants:		
Ordinary grant	8,000	
Cost of living bonus	5,811	
To cover deficit for 1935	2,142:21	
	—————	15,934:21
State grant for bursaries		26,168:74
Pupils' fees	13,460	
Deduction for hire of lodgings	1,415	
	—————	12,045
Rents		3,500
Interest		228:91
Grant from the municipality of Torsåker		300
Miscellaneous		28
John Sandler's Bursary fund		140
	Expenditure	
Teachers' salaries	42,569:99	
Other salaries and wages	6,612:20	
Share of teachers' pension contribution	1,022:36	
Maintenance of property	2,152:52	
Maintenance and additions to stock	582:37	
Teaching material	488:38	
Cleaning	1,231:60	
Lighting	2,006:45	
Fuel	4,199:60	
Paid out in bursaries	26,168:74	
Paid out from Sandler Fund	140	
Grant to library and reading circle	350	
Expenses, typing, printing	1,097:86	
Additional interest for bursary	198:81	
Administration	4,132:61	
Miscellaneous	251:31	

EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLEGES
 (b) Norra Ångermanlands P.H.S. Extract from accounts for
 1936-7:

	<i>Income</i>	kronor
Increased value of property after new building		140
State grant		36,903:15
Provincial grant		12,849
Provincial grant, extra		3,852
Fees for courses		6,125
Rents		4,929:60
Pupils' household		3,249:80
Miscellaneous		245:40
Interest		71:27
	<i>Expenditure</i>	
Maintenance of property		9,558:67
Library		537:30
Printing and notices		1,142:11
Teaching material		222:91
Writing off of stock		3,213:97
Fuel and light		8,254:26
Salaries		43,274:44
Pensions		1,102:17
Outlay		3,353:76
Cleaning		1,175:31
Telephone and postage		1,136:85
Agriculture		72:24

CHAPTER IV

THEIR INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

The People's Colleges in Sweden are for the most part situated in lovely country, and with the exception of five (viz. Birkagården in Stockholm, Skurup, Eslöv, Matarenge in Lappland, and Varo) they are all residential. A number of them have been built for the purpose, sometimes round one or two existent houses, sometimes with a fresh start and with a fine architectural plan to follow, as at Sigtuna. In the case of Wik in Uppland part of an ancient castle has been converted. Many of the colleges own a good deal of surrounding land: some have woods where forestry can be practically studied, others own some acres of arable land, and Sigtuna has an island across the Lake Mälar for summer picnics and expeditions. Like many schools in Sweden they may have also their *stuga* or cottage in the mountains from which ski-ing expeditions can go, and their boathouses on the usually neighbouring lake. It is not difficult in Sweden to find suitable surroundings, for industrialism is centralized in comparatively small towns, and the Swedes have profited very much from the mistakes of the countries whose industrial revolution came earlier, and have built and planned accordingly. More electricity and less coal is generally in use, and there are fewer blots on a great expanse of woodland, waterways and peaceful arable country.

The buildings of the Colleges are for the most part simple without being too austere. Fitting in with the surrounding scenery, they are generally wooden buildings, white or red, centring round the main hall, gymnasium or dining-room. Often the assembly hall, with its stage, piano and wireless, is convertible into a gymnasium, but much of the Swedish drill can be done out of doors without apparatus. At Lilsved, however, which has a strong physical-culture bias, there is a very

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well equipped gymnasium. Playing-fields are not used in any Swedish schools, as the chief forms of sport are skating and ski-ing, mountaineering and water-sports.

Study-bedrooms, fitted with running water, tables, electric light, chairs and divans, sometimes single, sometimes shared by two people, are the general rule. They are in separate men's and women's buildings. Common-rooms, senior and junior, are an essential of the scheme, and are generally found to be well furnished and attractive.

All the People's Colleges which I visited had libraries. Sigtuna had an especially fine one, housed in a room quite the equal of the one I was accustomed to as a student in England, and Brunnsvik library (though less finely housed) was well stocked with 8,000 volumes. Most rektors have good private libraries in their houses to draw upon. Hola College opens its library to the commune in return for a small grant, and others have special arrangements in addition for reading in good local libraries or those of secondary schools.

As there is now a great increase in the number of students who choose biology and chemistry courses the scientific equipment in the smaller colleges tends to be inadequate. Most colleges have some apparatus, however, housed in separate laboratories, so that the pupils can do experiments, but the teachers themselves recognize the increasing need for more expenditure on this side. There are frequently excellent rooms for weaving, cookery, laundry and child welfare in colleges which provide for women. Hampnäs College has a weaving-room equipped with twenty-four looms, and a sewing-room furnished in the traditional old farmhouse style with an open fireplace, old chests and hanging tapestry. Most schools have facilities for instruction in gardening, forestry, and farming.

Bathrooms are generally on Finnish lines—one small room fitted with tiers of benches and heated to a great degree, where the bather can sit and steam out impurities, then opening from this a room furnished with several washbasins and shower-baths, and another room for drying and changing—a very con-

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venient arrangement, economical of room and easily fixed up in the basement of any building. The Swedes are not cursed with any false prudishness, and massed bathing on these lines is usual throughout the country.

The People's Colleges attract to their teaching staff some very alive educationalists with a real sense of vocation. This is easy to understand, for the rates of pay have been till recently much lower than those obtaining in secondary schools and therefore the teachers cannot be said to be drawn to the work by financial considerations. They must be men of resource and vocation to stand the strain and demands of an exacting community life in comparatively isolated parts of the country. Also the colleges are much less well equipped than the average day school, and so it is on the use and delivery of their material that the teachers must mainly depend, and not on externals such as wireless, cinematograph illustrations and the like. The colleges are much more free of bureaucratic control than the State schools, where even the methods of teaching and the text-books are prescribed, and where freedom is also restricted by the final examinations. The teachers in the People's Colleges are only required to give their students a certificate of attendance, though in some cases (e.g. Sigtuna College) the standard *Good* or *Very Good* is also assigned. The minimum compulsory written work for a student is rarely more than two papers in a course, except in mathematics. A lazy or unsatisfactory student would be deprived of his grants only in an extreme case, and the teachers therefore have to rely on the influence of their own personality and the interest of their teaching for their control over the students.

A teacher in a People's College often requires a good deal of versatility, as the number of teachers in proportion to the number of subjects offered is apt to be small. For example, Birkä College had in 1936 seven full-time and six part-time teachers in a series of parallel courses involving nineteen subjects. In colleges where practical work predominates more teachers are required. Hola in 1936-7 had fourteen full-time and one part-

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time teacher for winter courses attended by 145 students. Hampnäs in the same year had seventeen full-time and four part-time teachers for winter courses attended by 134 students. These numbers include the house-mother, who also gives cookery classes.

Although at that time less well paid than their colleagues in elementary and secondary schools, and in some cases less well qualified than the latter, the majority of teachers whose lectures I attended showed great capacity for making their material lively and relevant to the widening of the horizon of the student's mind, to awakening wonder as well as imparting knowledge. It struck me, as an observer, that the rest of the Swedish educational system might in this matter be influenced by the freedom accorded to the People's Colleges, while we in England, with our growing tendency towards greater bureaucratic control, might well consider the disadvantages of too little freedom.

The broad outline of the curriculum, as laid down by the State, has been shown in Chapter III and educationalists will appreciate how much latitude is left to the individual colleges, a latitude which is fully utilized. It will be shown in Chapter VI how Sigtuna uses this freedom to give a strongly cultural and religious emphasis to its curriculum, and in Chapter V how Brunnsvik offers for study a number of subjects of an economic and political interest; but smaller and less-known colleges all have their individual lines which make them specially interesting to the observer. For example, Birka People's College in Jämtland (North Sweden) has a babies' home attached to it, and under the direction of a fully qualified state-registered nurse the women students have classes two and a half hours a day for a fortnight in baby-nursing, sewing, feeding, and laundry for babies and toddlers, and sick-nursing. The home is owned by the province, and to it are sent poor and weakly babies, who benefit by the proper attention, correct food and wholesome surroundings. The training course in the babies' home is open to pupils of seventeen years who are not members of the college.

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Many other colleges offer a practical course in child-nursing as a subject for their women pupils.

Amongst unusual subjects offered in 1936-7 was Practical Jurisprudence at Hola, with the syllabus of—Income tax and Property tax, Statute books and their arrangement, Natural and legal relationships, Husband's and wife's debts, Power of attorney, Security and bond, Real estate, deeds, and mortgage, Tenancy and rent, Administration, inventories, and division of inheritance. Birka gave its men students lessons in motor-driving. Sigtuna, Hampnäs, and Hola gave courses in the use of libraries, and at Hampnäs the syllabus included arranging and cataloguing books, writing up annual reports and requisitioning the state grant, as well as looking after the issue of books from the college library. At Brunnsvik Danish is taught, and at Birkagården in Stockholm pupils have the option of French as well as German and English, and the history of art is also studied. Tärna College trains between twenty and thirty gymnastic instructors every year and Lilsved has special courses in gymnastics. Hampnäs also offers a third-year course for students who have been through the second-year course: there is special coaching in English and German and geometry. The emphasis here is on individual study, and some pupils prepare through this course to take the *real examen* (about the standard of our School Certificate) privately.

Many of the colleges give separate courses for the men and women students on sex and hygiene under the direction of fully qualified men and women doctors respectively, as do also many of the training colleges and secondary schools in Sweden.

Several colleges have a special domestic science course, with instruction in preparing all types of food on all types of stoves, preserving, growing of vegetables and herbs, washing and ironing, under conditions likely to prevail in country homes, sick nursing and handwork. A pleasant room is generally set aside as the dining-room for these students, and here excellent meals are excellently served, and the visitor who observes this course is entertained to the first-rate results at midday.

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Instruction in gardening is in many colleges given to men and women students. At Hampnäs there is a very fine rock garden. The ground is specially arranged—part dry, part mossy and damp, part sand and part clay—so that it can be shown what plants will grow under different circumstances all over the large province of Ångermanland. The legends about particular flowers are inscribed on wooden sticks above them.

Methods of teaching in the colleges naturally vary according to the personalities and capacities of the teachers, and the subjects under study, but in most cases, especially in the humanistic subjects, the lecture is the chief medium of presentation. Text-books play a less important part than in the schools of Sweden, and class lectures by individual students, open discussions and debates play a correspondingly greater part. The lecture method was advocated by Grundtvig in Denmark as being more graphic and realistic, the teacher's personality and voice giving life to the pictures and thought—and indeed the lectures in most colleges are very much alive.

Lectures in history and literature are frequently prefaced by community singing of appropriate national songs.

In scientific subjects demonstration and experiment have played an important part right from the beginning of the colleges, emphasis being placed on teaching the pupils how to work successfully in a laboratory and to achieve accurate results, rather than on carrying through very elaborate and long-winded experiments. A great deal is done to relate the scientific syllabus and instruction to the students' own experience, to each one's life-work and background. To avoid confusion to the students, and to obviate the difficulties of one or two qualified teachers dealing with a wide number of scientific subjects, they are frequently studied in different terms of the same course: for example, chemistry and some geology may be studied in the autumn term, and biology and physics in the spring.

It is interesting to note that the people's colleges were pioneers in the teaching of geology as a special subject, and it has since then been introduced into some of the schools in Sweden.



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The People's Colleges have sought to strike root among the 'folk' or peasantry of Sweden, and have done much to restore the national dress, keep alive the festivals and save from the competition of industrialism the arts and crafts of the countryside, spinning, weaving and embroidery. It is natural, therefore, to find that a considerable time is devoted to *slöjd*—all forms of handwork—even in the main first-year course. At Hampnäs twenty-four hours a week are allotted to it in the first year, and in the domestic science course outlined above more than thirty-three hours a week may be spent on handwork alone. At Bollnäs the syllabus for the first year includes sewing, plain needlework, embroidery, braiding, lace making and crocheting, as well as dressmaking; and in weaving, table-napkins, handkerchiefs, mats, curtains, tablecloths and cushions, as well as dresses and national costumes, are made according to a variety of patterns and styles.

The colleges have not only sought to restore national arts and crafts and dress, but to revive the national festivals, and to give to folk-music its proper place in the training and life of the people. This is not as difficult a task as it has proved in England, for in the country districts, customs, traditions, dress and song had been kept alive far more than in this country. It is usual for a people's college to have its own songbook containing the best-known national songs, the local music of the countryside—some of it very lovely, such as the Värmland song with the haunting tune, *Och Värmland, du schöna du härliga land*, 'O Värmland, beautiful and lovely province'—and old school songs written and set to music by past teachers and students. Community singing is a favourite evening occupation among the students. Their voices to an English ear sound hearty but rather harsh, but in contrast with us they seem to have an excellent ear for part-singing.

The daily round of college life is broken regularly by the observance of national and religious festivals. Near the beginning of the autumn term, November 6th is dedicated to the memory of their great warrior king, Gustavus Adolphus II. I was staying

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at Sigtuna Folkshögskola at the time of the festival in 1937, and after dinner all the members of the college, and the guests, carrying lighted torches, made a procession down to the market place. There, in the company of all the villagers and the school-children of two neighbouring boarding-schools, we listened to a rousing talk by the college rektor, Dr. Björkvist, and sang the great Swedish songs, standing in the weird half-light made by the torches. Then we marched to an open space and made a great bonfire with the flares, and then back to the college for an evening of singing and playing, poetry-reading and apple-eating, and of course coffee-drinking.

All Saints' Day is also specially observed in several of the colleges. At Sigtuna, apart from the religious ceremonies described in Chapter IV, we were entertained to a special dinner, which opened with a thick soup made of goose blood and spices, and went on to roast goose.

On December 12th, St. Lucia's Day, the girl student chosen by the college as the Lucia (dressed in a white and silver garment, and with a crown of lighted candles on her head) will go with her band of attendant maidens from room to room of the college in the early morning with a tray of hot coffee and cakes: or there will be a celebration in the evening, with music and singing, and the legend of St. Lucia will be told again.

On April 30th at Sigtuna Valborgsmässeafhton (the Christian counterpart of Walpurgis Night) is celebrated with processions, bonfires, speeches and the singing of ancient songs of spring, showing the passing of winter and the coming of new light and life and warmth.

But Midsummer is the greatest of all Swedish secular festivals. I was privileged to spend it at Sigtuna in 1937. In the afternoon of Midsummer Eve past students arrived by train and omnibus from all over Sweden, and the town and foundation were humming with excitement and expectation. In the evening groups of gaily clad men and women in their various provincial dresses gathered on a large open space overlooking the lake, where a maypole was set up. For two hours all danced and sang

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around it, and a great ring of spectators from the neighbourhood watched or took part. About 10 p.m. we went up to the rose garden in the cloisters where some well-known artists gave us a splendid concert, and after that groups gathered in the various rooms for refreshments and talk, and many even stayed up to climb the highest hill in the district and watch the Midsummer Dawn. It was a beautiful warm night with an eerie luminous twilight which never grew really dark, and all living things seemed half-asleep.

On Midsummer morning a service was held, and in the evening a great procession of students and visitors walked round the grounds, and then assembled for the open-air banquet laid in the garden. Here, amongst others, I had to pass through the ordeal of a speech, but much was forgiven me for attempting it in Swedish and for wearing a Swedish costume for the occasion — a dress from Dalarna, a black skirt with a wide border hand-embroidered in wool with green and red and blue flowers, a white blouse with finely tatted edges to the sleeves and collar, a hand-woven belt of many colours with a large embroidered wool bag hanging from it, a red jacket with hand-beaten silver fastenings, a red bonnet also covered with rich and colourful embroidery, and red stockings and black shoes.

Each year's representative student spoke of his memories of the college and his debt to it in his present work. Messages were read from past students and guests, testifying to the farflung influence of Sigtuna. The summer after I left Sweden I saw to it that a greeting from England should reach the college in time for this festival.

Then there were songs, and more speeches from well-famed people, and dramatic monologues by a leading Swedish actor. The celebrations lasted till the candles on the tables had been lighted and had died down.

At Hola College special celebrations sometimes take place on November 14th, Nordens Dag (the day of the Northern countries). There are readings and music from Danish, Norwegian and Swedish authors and composers, and lantern slides of these three countries are shown.

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Besides these national festivals the colleges celebrate the beginnings and ends of terms with special lectures and entertainments and the acting of plays. The routine is also frequently enlivened by lectures from visitors, concerts, expeditions, and the like, as in any ordinary school or college. Some colleges emphasize the religious basis of festivals, while others celebrate them with the traditional home ceremonies.

What is the typical daily routine of a People's College? Here are two quotations from the timetable of Birka College.

		<i>Weekdays</i>
6.30.	Rise.	
7.	Early breakfast (this consists of coffee and rolls or rusks).	
7.10 to 7.25.	Morning prayers.	
7.25 to 7.55.	Tidying rooms, domestic work, etc.	
8 to 8.45.	Lectures.	
8.45 to 9.30.	Breakfast (a more substantial meal, with fish, bacon, eggs, etc.).	
9.30 to 12.5.	Lectures.	
12.5 to 2 or 1 to 2.55.	Lunch (one meat course and coffee and <i>smörgasbord</i> , the Swedish hors d'œuvre) preceded by gymnastics on certain days of the week.	
2.55 to 3.40.	Lectures.	
3.40 to 4.5.	Coffee.	
4.5 to 7.30.	Individual work.	
7.30.	Evening meal, followed by community singing, readings, etc.	
9.30.	College door closes.	
10.	Silence signal.	
		<i>Sundays</i>
9.30.	Breakfast and tidying up.	
12.	Coffee.	
2.30.	Lunch.	
5 to 7.	Coffee. Lectures.	
7.	Dinner.	
8 to 9.	Meetings.	

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In most colleges the economic position is much lightened because of the help given by the women students on the domestic side and by the men students on the farm and in the gardens and woods.

The cost of the courses at the colleges varies a little, but is generally kept low. In Sigtuna, one of the most expensive, the fees for instruction in the winter are approximately £2. 10s., in the summer £1. 5s. for the first year and £2. 10s. for the second year. Lodging costs 10s. to £1. 10s. a month, and board costs £3 a month. The equipment and books cost a student about £2. 5s. for a whole course. The students bring their own towels and bed-linen, and keep their rooms tidy. Thus the total expense ranges between twenty-six and thirty pounds for the winter course (twenty-one weeks), and is about half that for the summer (thirteen weeks). At Arvika the course costs £2, and board and lodging £11. 2s. 6d. This is remarkably reasonable considering the delightful premises and surroundings, the cheerful double study-bedrooms, the good food, and the opportunity to have baths and do personal laundry.

Scholarships from the State vary from 15s. to £2. 5s. a month according to the means of the parents of the student, and in some colleges (for example, Hola) the County Council take over the cost of board and lodging, so that little remains to be found by the pupil. The municipality of Stockholm may give one of its pupils as much as £5 (100 kronor) towards a course.

All charges for short courses and conferences are on the same reasonable basis. At Sigtuna Guest House (described in Chapter VI) for a short stay the charge for board and room is between six and nine kronor (six to nine shillings) a day, with a reduction for a longer stay, and a further reduction for clergymen and students.

The personnel of the colleges varies according to the locality and the origin and work of the college. The majority of students still come from the agricultural class, but the number of industrial workers is steadily increasing, and the sons and daughters of professional men have come sometimes to the colleges, which

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are of course open to all. Sigtuna College has a second-year summer course for women specially designed for those who have attended a high school or its educational equivalent. This attracts a number of professional men's daughters. The students come from and go back to every type of work. Their jobs are kept open for them in their absence. It will be shown in Chapter V how the students of Brunnsvik come chiefly from industrial work: in the colleges of Skåne in South Sweden the majority are naturally workers on the land. In Sigtuna winter course 1936-7 sixteen were agriculturalists, twenty were industrial workers, one a merchant seaman, ten fishermen and four shop assistants. Among the women students thirty-four were either helping in their own homes or were in domestic service, one was a shop assistant and thirteen were training as nurses.

One of the best features of the daily life of the People's Colleges is the home atmosphere, to which all kinds of students have testified. This has not been easy to achieve, for at the beginning, the Swedish colleges were not always residential. Nevertheless, the rektors and their families have shown generous hospitality; they have welcomed the students into their homes, and shared with them the chief meal of the day and the evening entertainments, and in this way have fostered the home atmosphere till it strikes the observer first and foremost. The novel *Vårdträdet*¹ (Our Traditional Tree) by Jeanna Oterdahl, who was herself a woman student at a People's College, gives the atmosphere very well indeed and at the same time conveys its vision and outlook.

¹ Published by Lindblads, Uppsala, 1938.

CHAPTER V

BRUNNSVIK

The early People's Colleges, as described in Chapter II, were largely recruited from the agricultural sections of the community though most of them were, according to their regulations, open to all. The foundation of Brunnsvik is a new departure since it addressed itself directly to the industrial worker. In July 1906, a meeting was held in Ludvika in the province of Dalarna, on the initiative of the poet Erik Forslund, a man profoundly interested in the rich and historic peasant culture of the province. A society of subscribers was formed and a house rented but the municipality of Ludvika refused a grant. As the Labour organizations were helping the movement the Conservative Government in power at the time rejected an appeal for a State grant. However, more than 44,000 kronor (£2,200) was raised, due to generous gifts from the Trades Union Council, the Co-operative Society and the Temperance Movement. It was not till 1910 that the first State and County Council grants were received and the intervening time was one of bitter struggle and criticism. Many feared the influence of the College, declaring it a seat of socialist agitation. Actually there is no very marked political bias in the work of the College itself, except that provided by the fact that many of its students are drawn from the Labour organizations and many visitors come to the College representing Labour movements abroad. Also within the grounds stands the Landsorganisation-skola (Trade Union School for the education of their officials) which holds short courses and conferences for the different trades in turn—separate entirely from the People's College courses but exchanging rooms and lectures with the college and allowing its students the use of their gymnasium and dining-room and sometimes their student rooms.

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The buildings of the People's College and Trades Union School together comprise a large dining-hall and a well-equipped gymnasium where every day the students spend some time and which the villagers may use on two days every week. Pianos and a wireless are kept in the gymnasium. There is a large lecture-hall with a cinematograph installation, a newspaper room with the best dailies and weeklies of all parties, a library, small lecture-rooms, and separate boarding-houses for men and women students. The Trades Union School provides separate rooms for its students, whereas the college provides a room for two students together.

There are only winter courses for the College students at Brunnsvik. In the summer for two months the Arbetarnesbildningsförbund (the Swedish W.E.A.) holds its summer course and the Trades Union School runs a series of short courses for various types of trades, and conferences take place between employers and employed. In 1937 a course of study was offered at Brunnsvik on English labour conditions with British representatives present.

Brunnsvik's students come from all over Sweden and in that respect only does the college compare with Sigtuna—both are something much more than provincial undertakings fulfilling local needs, and they are known throughout all Sweden and in the other Scandinavian countries. In 1936-7 the students came from the following provinces to Brunnsvik: Kopparberg 17, Västernorrland 8, Alvsborg 7, Stockholm province 6, Stockholm city 6, Västmanland 6, Gävleborg 5, Blekinge 5, Göteborg (Gothenburg) and Bohus 3, Norrbotten 3, Uppsala 3, Västerbotten 3, Örebro 3, Jämtland 2, Kalmar 2, Södermanland 2, Värmland 2, Malmöhus 1 and 1 came from Esbjerg in Denmark.

Not only do students come from various parts of Sweden but they come also from varied types of work and employment, though the bias here is industrial. Statistics of the same year show that of the men students 6 came from agricultural work, 54 from industry or manual trades, 2 were merchant seamen, 6 were engaged in commerce, 6 were unclassified and 1 was

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unemployed. Of the women students 4 were engaged in industry, 1 was a nurse, 1 a domestic worker and 3 were unemployed.¹

The average age of the men students was 23.3 in the first year, 24.8 in the second-year course, and of the women 22.2 in the first year and 24.6 in the second year.

As there are always more applicants than places those pupils who can show recommendations from their Labour organizations or who have followed correspondence or evening classes have the best chance of entry.

In the matter of previous education students of the second-year course stand fairly high and for that reason the studies are able to be both of a more advanced and also of a more independent character than in some of the less famous and more provincial colleges. In 1936, 12 of the students who registered for the second-year course had been through the first year, 5 had the *real examen*, corresponding in standard roughly with our School Certificate and taken generally at 16-17 years of age at the end of a Modern School course; 1 had gone through Class 5 in the Secondary School (about Higher School Certificate standard); 1 had been through a commercial school and 2 through a Landsorganisationskola or Trade Union school; while 5 others had reached the required standard through study circles and correspondence courses. One pupil whom I met in 1938 struck me as typifying the origin, purpose and background of Brunnsvik. He was a worker in an oil factory engaged on eight-hour shifts. In his spare time he was secretary of the local W.E.A. and T.U.C.; he also did librarian's work. By his own efforts he had previously won a scholarship to travel and study labour conditions in Austria. By dint of following the Co-operative Society's First English Correspondence Course through two years and assisted by gramophone records, he had qualified to enter straight into the second year of the

¹ In the first ten years, 1906-16, at Brunnsvik, 66 per cent of the students came from industry, 15.5 from agriculture, and 18.4 from varied occupations.

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college at Brunnsvik. He hoped after six months there and a three month special course in the summer to get a political or journalistic job. The Co-operative Society's course are run on an interesting basis; details cannot be given here but the system is that when one course has been successfully completed and the written work adequately done the correspondent's fees are returned and he has the wherewithal to embark on a second course. It is possible to complete two free courses. Many other students come to the college with the foundation laid through W.E.A. Study Circles in which written work has been compulsory.

The individualism of a People's College is most clearly seen in its curriculum and here, in Brunnsvik, as we should expect, the stress is laid on economic and allied subjects. For subjects studied in the first-year course the following plan provides the basis though small changes may be made from year to year.

	<i>Number of teaching periods a week</i>
Compulsory subjects of study:	
Natural Science (including physics, astronomy, meteorology, chemistry and biology)	4
History of Swedish Literature	2
Swedish History	6
Voluntary:	
Languages, English or German	2
Mathematics	2
National Economy	4
Swedish Language (Grammar, Essays, etc.)	4
History of Culture or General History	6
Municipal Government	2
Total	32

with the frequent addition or variation of Book-keeping, Economic Geography, Eugenics, International politics, and the history of the World Labour Movement.

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*Number of
teaching periods
a week*

In the second year the Compulsory subjects are:

Swedish	6
History of the Labour Movement or Mathematics	4
Sociology	4
	—
Total	14
	—

Voluntary subjects—students take line A or B.

A. *Humanistic*

Literary History	6
Religious History	2
Philosophy	2
Swedish History or Psychology (in some yrs.)	2
	—
Total	12
	—

B. *Scientific*

National Economy	8
Natural Science or Mathematics, Geography, Chemistry and Biology	4
	—
Total	12
	—

English or German are entirely voluntary subjects open to sections A and B jointly and involving two periods a week.

In the second year much emphasis is laid on individual study, leadership of discussion groups and the right use of books. The curriculum of either year is worthy of detailed study but for our purpose we will limit ourselves to showing the comparatively ambitious scope of the second-year work.

SECOND-YEAR COURSE

BOTH LINES

Sociology.

The study of special modern sociological questions.

The History of the Swedish Labour Movement, in detail from 1860 to the present day (conducted on study circle lines with essay work).

Sociology.

Some of the topics set for essays:

1891-1902. The struggle for universal suffrage.

1920-2. Social Democrats in power.

1926-32. Social Democrats in opposition.

The origin of the Swedish Arbetarnesbildningsförbund (W.E.A.).

Workers' movements and religion.

The story of the Danish Labour Movement between 1871 and 1937.

Swedish Language.

Grammar and punctuation. Style and appreciation. Essays. Dictation. Reading and speaking exercises. Parsing and analysis.

A LINE, HUMANISTIC

Literary History.

Reading and criticism of literature and its terminology and the development of literary judgement, using models from ancient literature. Study of the influence of literature upon general culture.

Religious History.

Primitive religions. The origin and history of Christianity and its position now. Buddhism. Mohammedanism.

Philosophy.

Chief problems of philosophy and the history of philosophical thought from the Greeks to the present day. Study of recent philosophies.

Swedish History.

From the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century and with reference to general European history.

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B LINE, SCIENTIFIC

National Economy.

Lectures on Commerce, Finance and the Crisis.

Study circle subjects include: Present-day problems in Swedish mines; Agriculture in Sweden; Co-operation; Present-day finance, with special attention to exchange; Markets; Swedish social problems.

Biology.

Cell-life. Anatomy and physiology of man's body. Hygiene.

Chemistry.

Aim is to give the pupils an idea of the importance of chemistry in industry and daily life.

Revision of groundwork; study of chemical compounds in inorganic chemistry; detailed work on iron; chief factors in organic chemistry; relation of chemistry to the growth of plants and animals with special study of our food and its composition.

Experiments.

Mathematics.

Use of slide rule; revision of compound rules; fractions; equations with one unknown; profit and loss; discount; interest; exchange; stocks and shares; company accounts; compound interest; currency; acceleration and velocity; equations with more than one unknown; graphs; measurement of surfaces; theory of averages.

Geography.

The economic geography of the European Great Powers, of the United States and of Japan. Their colonial problems.

It might be wondered whether the standard of lecturing is bound to be very elementary even for second-year students, remembering the scope of the curriculum and the age and educational attainments of many of the students, but after listening

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to a number of lectures in both courses I must admit that I was most surprised at the standard, at the amount of knowledge imparted, at the interesting and provocative ideas put across and at the technical terms used and understood. For example, one lecture to first-year students on the History of Culture took us from 1500 to 1660 approximately, pointing out the parallel and revolutionary ideas of nationality and Protestantism, the chief factors in the development of these, and the part played by such men as Machiavelli and Erasmus respectively in their development. A lecture to second-year students of Philosophy concentrated on the struggle between realists and nominalists in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, one on National Economy showed the factors which regulate prices, one on Sociology gave a survey of the rapid industrialization of agriculture itself within the period 1870-1937.

I came away from one lecture with an interesting synopsis of the distribution of the Swedish population between 1870 and 1930, which has been useful since. Because it shows the rapid growth of the industrial element since 1870, the *raison d'être* of a college of Brunnsvik's type, I will quote it here.

Distribution of the Swedish population

	<i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Commerce</i>	<i>Professions</i>	<i>House-work</i>	<i>Etc.</i>
1870	51.6	9.5	3.0	5.6	4.6	25.7
1880	49.6	11.5	4.3	5.1	4.3	25.2
1910	42.9	27.4	10.4	4.1	3.5	12.6
1920	38.4	31.4	12.8	4.6	3.7	9.1
1930	34.7	31.7	15.5	5.3	3.9	8.9

Other general topics such as the causes of Swedish industrial prosperity of the 1930's, statistics showing the comparative daily wages of men and women since 1871, others showing the greatly increased number of middlemen in industry and commerce compared with the numbers of employers and workers,

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were also of great interest and value. In Literary History one lecture was given on comparative types of humour in writing and the difference between *Don Quixote* and modern Swedish humorous writers was shown.

It would be hard to assess the influence of Brunnsvik on Swedish life and especially in the political and economic spheres. Suffice it perhaps to say that it has for Principal, Dr. Alf Ahlberg, a doctor of philosophy and a well-known author,¹ and that Ricard Sandler who was Foreign Minister until the beginning of the present war, had been Principal of Brunnsvik before. The fact that he also founded the Swedish Workers' Educational Association (Arbetarnesbildningsförbund) and was first President of it demonstrates the close connection between the two movements.

¹ 'One of our most prominent, modern and broad-minded philosophers', said Nils Bosson in a lecture at the World Conference on New Education at Elsinore, 1933.

CHAPTER VI

SIGTUNA

‘A visit to the place shows clearly that one is confronted with a College that not only has something quite new in its general programme but also by the outer garment reveals itself as something the country has up to now not beheld.’ Quotation from *Svenska Folkhögskolan, 1865–1918*, p. 225.

‘By Lake Mälar there stands a stronghold where Youth is ever a welcome guest. There come together all who wish to give and to take the best that life can offer.’ By a pupil of Sigtuna People’s College.

Exactly five years ago I flew from one of the loveliest ancient places in Swedish territory, Visby, to the original capital of Sweden, Sigtuna, in order not to miss the Mid-summer Festival there. A study in contrasts—Visby, in the island of Gotland, at one time centre of the wealth and trade of the Hanseatic League is indeed ‘a city of ruins and roses’. As I looked from the hotel balcony on that June morning and drank my good Swedish coffee in a sunshine so hot that at seven o’clock hat and sun spectacles were essential, I could see street upon street crammed with the ruined shells of beautiful churches—here a chancel with rose window, there a cloister, and elsewhere almost a complete building but roofless—a yard or two away from each other and straddled with wild flowers, and beyond the city was the yellow sand and the sea, blue under the clear sky. At 7 p.m., after a smooth short flight over the islands of the Archipelago, I was walking through the one street of wooden houses, past one small ruined church of St. Peter, the sole relic of the ancient city of Sigtuna. Yet Swedish people talk more about Sigtuna to-day than about Visby and many

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travel the same road up to the centre of interest now, the Sigtuna Foundation.

‘We wish this to be a Castle, a Home, a School and a Sanctuary’, said one of the speakers at the opening of the Foundation’s Folkhögskola, and on approaching the building situated on a rise above the small town the traveller is impressed with the castle-monastery with its medieval-looking tower. Yellow granite steps lead up to the hall and there on the left, through glass doors, can be seen the cloisters surrounding a rose garden in the middle of which is a well. Overlooking the cloisters on three sides are the guest rooms to which at such times have gathered many of Sweden’s famous poets, politicians, artists and not a few of England’s well-known names, for instance, Sir Charles Trevelyan, at the time when he was President of the Board of Education.

The rooms of the Guest House are simple without being austere, and the outlook on to the cloisters assures a degree of peace and detachment for which pilgrims to Sigtuna primarily go. From the dining-room on the same floor as the guest rooms steps lead up to a reading-room and from there a spiral staircase goes up to the turret-room—a small, quiet room with windows on three sides overlooking the whole of the Foundation, and, beyond the fields, the lake.

The buildings of the People’s College proper, some in the same building as the Guest House and others connected by the cloisters or a long covered passage, comprise lecture-rooms, a large hall, which can seat over 350, dining-rooms, staff room, student-rooms, and in the basement large kitchens, cellars, bathrooms, a laboratory and a laundry.

Of central importance in the life and story of Sigtuna Foundation is the Chapel, on which more will be said later. There is a large library of over 25,000 books at the furthest end of the building, well looked after and well furnished, and a great source of pride to the College. The Librarian gives lessons in the proper and effective use of a library to all students at the beginning of the course. In the same grounds are the Principal’s own

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house, small cottages shared by a number of students, pavilions which are used as schoolrooms in the summer and a space kept separate for use as an open-air church.

Also under the direction of the Foundation are other institutions which give and take in the general life—the large well-equipped boys' boarding-school run on public school lines, known as the Classical Humanistic School, and a Training College for Lay Workers.

The Foundation, or *Stiftelse*, is a legal body with a charter defining how the Governors shall be elected and the accounts audited. It is managed by a committee of seven members who retire in turn and by lot, their places being filled by representatives from the Swedish Society for Temperance and Adult Education, the Church Board for Voluntary Work, the Swedish Student Christian Movement and the Chapters of Uppsala and Lund respectively. The Archbishop has the right to take part in the discussions. The accounts are audited by men appointed by the Town Council of Stockholm and the County Council of Uppsala.

The history of Sigtuna People's College is interesting and unique. The Young Church Movement¹ which began its crusades in 1908, needed two things: a centre for fellowship and planning and inspiration, and a place where Swedish young people might be infected with the new spirit. As the aim of the People's Colleges generally is to awaken the spirit to higher things it was natural that the Movement should desire first and foremost a People's College with a specifically Christian outlook. It is significant that the Foundation aimed at starting its activities in 1917—the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, and thus emphasized their desire to link the best in the Lutheran tradition of the Swedish Church with the movement towards the union of all evangelical churches. Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, well known in English Church circles as a leader of the œcumenical movement, was one of the original members of the Foundation. A generous donation of 350,000

¹ Described in Chapter II, p. 31.

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kronor (£17,500) from a manufacturer by the name of Kjellberg enabled the Foundation to plan and build straight away. They aimed at establishing 'educational institutions' and 'by arranging conferences and courses and by the founding of a Guest House and by providing opportunities for spiritual renewal and friendly fellowship, to support and give a home to voluntary work for the Lutheran faith and Church teaching in our country, in grateful memory of the gift of the Reformation and with a deep sense of the responsibility involved'.¹

On the 16th of June 1916, the foundation-stone of the People's College was laid by the Archbishop. On October 31st, observed in Sweden as Martin Luther's Day, the college was opened and by the following summer the Guest House, the Chapel, and the rose-garden were ready.

Since this is a Church People's College there is a special place given to religious teaching, not only in the lecture-hall but also in study circles that meet on Sunday, and in the Friday night discussions and 'Question Box', through which any shy student can ask any question anonymously, and above all, in the simple evening service in the beautiful little Chapel, where guests and students and workers voluntarily come together. Religious observance is not compulsory though it is general. The prospectus makes it quite clear to all intending pupils what is the basis of the college: 'To try to build up on a Christian and national foundation a body of young men and women who will be sound, knowledgeable, and efficient members of homes and communities.' For all that it is usual for a number of the students to be drawn from very different schools of thought, and atheists and communists have been known to speak and write afterwards of the wide spiritual freedom in Sigtuna, as well as the great spiritual inspiration.

Sigtuna People's College also lays great stress on the celebration of the Church festivals as well as the traditional festivals described in Chapter IV. On All Saints' Day a special service is held in the Parish Church of St. Mary, and the fine and famous

¹ M. Björkqvist, *The Sigtuna Foundation*, p. 12.

Danish hymn 'Den store vide flok' (The greater, wider flock) is sung. In the evening the College Chapel is decorated entirely in white for evening service. A great number of people gather in the Guest House afterwards for a special supper and musical evening. On St. Lucia's Day the light-crowned Lucia with her maidens sits in the front pew for evening chapel. Christmas is celebrated very beautifully and quietly by the permanent staff and resident guests. On Maundy Thursday a special service is held in the Chapel and as in many English churches at the same time the Cross on the altar is draped in black, but a white cloth and the chalice and the candles remain. On Good Friday the students attend an evening Communion Service in the Parish Church. At Easter there are special celebrations and services as well as the Swedish traditional custom of Easter eggs with appropriate rhyming couplets on them. At Whitsuntide the Swedish poet Tegnér's hymn 'Nattvardsbarnen' (The Confirmation candidates) is always sung.

The governing body of Sigtuna People's College consists of the Rektor, four members appointed by the Committee of the Foundation, two members representing the County Council of Stockholm and two the County Council of Uppsala on condition of the receipt of an annual grant of 1,500 kronor (£750) from them. The governors hold office for two years and organize the administration and finance of the college in accordance with the rules laid down by the State and outlined in Chapter III.

The curriculum thus organized differs from that of the majority of provincial colleges in the time allotted to general cultural studies and to those which contribute to the understanding and development of character. The syllabus for 1936-7 for the first-year courses will be given in detail, not only because it illustrates that point but also because it gives a good example of the type of studies pursued in the first-year work of most colleges with a hint of the knowledge already assumed and the scope of the work intended.

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FIRST-YEAR COURSE. MEN STUDENTS

	<i>Hours per week</i>
<i>Religion.</i> Study of religious personalities: Luther, Wesley, etc.	2
<i>Character Training.</i> Lectures on the development of practical independence and important problems of youth	1
<i>Swedish.</i> Grammar. Dictation, Letter-writing. Composition, Style. Exercises in good reading and lectures	5
<i>History of Literature.</i> Old Norse poetry. Folk-songs and ballads. The Swedish hymnbook. Swedish literature from the time of the French classical period to the end of the nineteenth century. Readings from selected authors	3
<i>History.</i> The principal features of our country's history in recent times with a review of issues and facts needful for the understanding of present developments and with emphasis on the influence of personalities upon different periods. Important issues in world history	3
<i>History of Social Developments.</i> Review of conditions leading up to the Industrial Revolution and new problems arising therefrom, and attempts to solve these problems	1
<i>Civics.</i> Study of <i>Medborgarkunskap</i> (The Science of Citizenship) by Rydén. The chief Swedish statutes and the latest reforms.	1
Municipal government in preparation for membership of local groups and municipal life in their own home neighbourhood	2
<i>Geography.</i> Study of maps and the globe. European geography and its influence on culture and the means of livelihood. Sweden in detail, and especially from a commercial and industrial viewpoint. Survey of Finland, Norway and Denmark. Map-drawing	2

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	Hours per week
<i>Nature Study.</i>	
Astronomy: its history, laws and modern developments	3
Geology. The most important facts about the history of the earth's development and its present condition	3
Certain sections of everyday chemistry, mechanics and science of heat	1
Study of electricity	2
<i>Mathematics.</i> Revision of decimals, rule of three, simple and compound interest. Discount and interest, exchange, stocks and shares. Geometry: area and volume	4
<i>Drawing.</i> Geometrical drawings of all types	2
<i>Writing</i>	1
<i>Singing.</i> Unison and part-singing	4
<i>Gymnastics</i>	4

FIRST-YEAR COURSE. WOMEN STUDENTS

Religion, Character training, Swedish, History of Literature, mainly taken with the men students.

History and Civics are studied with the men students (see above).

Geography. Study of maps and the globe. Study of Sweden: its countryside, its commerce and industry. Norway, Denmark and Finland. Map drawing

Nature Study (with the men's course) with the exception of the study of electricity.

Mathematics. Revision of the four simple rules of arithmetic, compound rules, decimals. Fractions, rule of three, percentages, interest. Practical problems. (2 divisions.)

Drawing 3

(a) Nature drawing, flowers, leaves, plants, etc.

(b) Designs and patterns.

(c) Model drawing.

(d) Chromatics.

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	<i>Hours per week</i>
<i>Hygiene.</i> General health and hygiene for women	2
<i>Writing</i>	1
<i>Handwork.</i> Needlework	4
<i>Gymnastics</i> and ball games	5

Study circles were organized dealing with a variety of subjects such as: The history of Art up to the nineteenth century; Ancient philosophies; Book-keeping; Practical problems in municipal government, etc. A course in Bible study; discussions led by two students every week. Two lectures given to men students on sexual hygiene and lectures on Current Events with commentaries on the newspapers complete the curriculum offered for the winter course.

The finances of the College have been met from the beginning very largely through private donations to the Foundation, and in recent years church collections have been authorized in support of it. Private money has largely contributed to the fine buildings and there still remains a debt to meet on these, but in the yearly budget part of the economic burden is met by State and provincial grants, as shown in the translated budget for 1936-7 quoted below.

<i>Income</i>	kronor
State grant (not including bursaries, 12,336:96 kr.)	35,869:34
Provincial grant	7,500
Pupils' tuition fees ¹	5,803:50
Grant from the Foundation	13,000
Miscellaneous	285:56
Rents	5,090
Capitations	765:27
Balance due for the year	2,129:91
<hr/>	
Total	70,443:58

¹ Note the small role played by pupils' fees in the budget of this college. It is typical.

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	<i>Expenditure</i>	kronor
Salaries		47,418:91
Pensions		1,154:33
Teaching material, library		461:33
Interest		150:10
Rents for rooms for teaching, heat, light and cleaning		18,500
Prize books		284:63
Post Office account		72:24
Printing, notices, lectures, telephones, newspapers, stationery, postage, etc.		2,402:04
	Total	70,443:58

	<i>Assets</i>	kronor
Deposits in Royal Exchequer, 1936		8,345
Teaching material		1,800
Library		800
Divers debtors		441
Cash		35
Balance due on profit and loss account		2,129:91
	Total	13,550:91

	<i>Liabilities</i>	
Divers creditors		1,072
Loan		10,173:40
Foundation's loan account		2,305:51
	Total	13,550:91

Another feature which distinguishes Sigtuna is the extent and strength of the Students' Union (Sigtuna Folkhögskolas Elevförbund). All former and actual students may be members of

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the union which is directed by a committee of seven members. The Principal of the College is the President of the Union and the six other members are elected at the annual Winter Festival. The students are admitted into the fellowship of the Union through a ceremony which makes clear what is expected of them; they get the Sigtuna badge, the symbol of which—the ring, the rose, the heart and the cross—are explained to them, and they are exhorted to spread Sigtuna ideals and to try to realize them in their daily life. Of course some members drop out in later years, but it remains a flourishing and influential association, and in towns and villages all over Sweden groups of old students forgather in 'Sigtuna Rings' and keep alive the inspiration and fellowship which the time spent in Sigtuna gave them. For the March Festival and at Midsummer, students come from far and wide to renew that inspiration and find again that peace and fellowship. In 1921 there was built a Boys' Cottage, furnished like an old Swedish farmhouse with 'Vårdträdet', the traditional tree, planted by the first-year students and growing up as the College grows, and a garden round it, and two years later a similar Girls' Cottage was ready. Here old students can stay for a very small charge, cooking their own meals in the College kitchen to save expense or joining the present students in the dining-hall. Poor students can have rooms without charge. The old students also have their own Scholarship Fund for emergencies such as sickness or unemployment, and money can be borrowed from a special fund contributed by them. A quarterly magazine, *Sigtuna Ring*, also binds old and new students together.

In many ways Sigtuna College offers particular opportunities to its students. There is the interest afforded by contact with other units of the Foundation, with the Lay Workers' College, and especially with the boys and masters of the Classical Humanistic School, and with the people of all classes of Sigtuna town who frequently join in the festivals and open meetings. I was present in March 1938 at a Dramatic Evening in the Hall of the Boys' School where the chief event was an

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amusing light play called 'Geography and Love'. It was produced by the English lecturer of the People's College, the standard of acting was high and the costumes and scenic effects good. The audience included the Staff and boys of the school, many people from the town, visitors from the Guest House, and the Staff and students of the People's College. The Chapel and the Library of the College is open to members of the Classical Humanistic School and there is an interchange of teachers and lectures on frequent occasions. Also once a month the Guest House holds a soirée open to the Public School and to the town, and talks, readings, music, with light refreshments is the order of the evening.

Yet not only do the boys of the School and the students of the College exchange meetings and hold social and athletic events together, not only is the Guest House always full of the most interesting and varied personalities such as Bertil Malmberg the poet, who was for many years resident there, and Sven Stolpe the author, a frequent visitor; not only do the students hear speeches from the most famous politicians, churchmen and men of letters at their Midsummer banquets, but their educational home has become a place renowned throughout Sweden in all sides of its life—a place where in the late summer conferences are held between doctors and clergymen, business men and university representatives, sportsmen, and churchmen—conferences in which H.R.H. the Crown Prince, Archbishops, and Cabinet ministers have taken part.

In short, Sigtuna is a name to conjure with and when a Swede says to you, 'You must go to Sigtuna' or 'Have you visited Sigtuna?' he does not mean 'Have you visited the relics of our ancient capital of which there are so few?' but 'Have you been within the walls where has been born so much that is stirring and changing Swedish life to-day? have you met Dr. Manfred Björkqvist, a man of quiet, unostentatious piety with a hidden fire and vigour none could deny? have you known the peace and stillness of spirit, the rest from the strain and stress of modern hurrying life that we have experienced there?'

CHAPTER VII

ARVIKA

Arvika People's College was founded at the instigation of two young men, Valdemar Dahlgren, the present Principal, and G. Aranson. In January 1905 they called a meeting, raised a subscription and formed a trust for a People's College in south-west Värmland. Countess Anna Mörner contributed 20,000 kronor (£1,000) as a loan and on the first Board of Governors sat the poet, Oskar Stjerne.

In June the building was begun and the College opened on the 4th of November. Women as well as men students were taken almost from the beginning. In 1912 the College moved to Agneteberg, a place filled with memories of Selma Lagerlöf's books and Gejer's poems. In 1926, it was moved again to its present home, Ingesund.

In 1921 the keen musical tradition was founded and a special spelamanskurs (musicians' course) for one week was started. In 1923 the People's Music School became a separate institution. It is because of the links with the Music School that Ingesund is specially interesting, otherwise it follows much the same course as the other provincial colleges, with a bias always to all things musical. The only other striking feature is in the women's course where the detailed curriculum and time allotted to mathematics and nature study¹ enables girls who wish to become nurses to qualify by two courses at the College in place of the 'real examen' (examination at the end of a Central School course) or in place of the 'normal kompetens' (certificate at the end of the private Higher Girls' Schools). On the practical side of the women's course I noticed especially the high standard of the work done in sewing, in the smocking of baby frocks, in Italian quilting, and in the making of tailored coats

¹ This opportunity is also afforded at Sigtuna.

and frocks. The men students can take weaving lessons if they wish and can share in the use of the laundry.

The pupils of the People's College are mainly from the province, whereas the Music School students come from all over Sweden. The Music School shares the same Principal as the College and the same gymnastic instructor. Students of both institutions use the College dining-room, the Music School gymnasium and concert hall and the grounds are common to all.

The aim of the Music School is not only to give technical musical training but to show the place of music in social and personal development. 'The importance of music in the cultural life of a people does not rest so much upon the fact that it is sung and played for the people but that it is sung and played by the people,'¹ therefore it is the importance of amateur performance that is stressed here though professional musical students are also welcomed.

The purpose of a 'Folkliga Musikskola' will be stultified if the folk themselves cannot take part in such music. In olden times in Sweden there were a great number of wandering minstrels but by the end of the nineteenth century the music of the countryside had almost disappeared and this School aims at reviving it, producing leaders and instructors for musical circles and creating new music 'for a living tree shoots forth new buds' (prospectus). All students must learn to sing 'for a people's singing is a people's wealth', and moreover, 'youth which sings not is half dumb'. A student can learn two instruments at the same time, string or wind instruments or the guitar and, except in special cases, they must provide their own instruments. Two or sometimes three lessons on each instrument are given every week. A charge of four to seven kronor a term is made for the use of the school piano. Instruction is also given in the history and theory of music, in conducting, in orchestral and chamber music. Singing, unison and choral, is taken with the College pupils, as also are gymnastics.

¹ From the prospectus.

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Men and women students of eighteen and sixteen years of age respectively can attend at the same time the People's College for ten hours a week, and these pupils are eligible for bursaries and State grants. The Music School receives a State grant of 5,000 kronor (£250) towards its maintenance annually, and in 1931 Ricard Sandler proposed in Parliament a grant of 7,000 kronor for scholarships at the Music School but this was not passed and therefore many students take the courses at both schools concurrently in order to qualify for grants.

The cost of the whole course is 340 kronor (£17) inclusive, 140 kronor for the autumn term only and for the spring term 225 kronor. To qualify for entrance a pupil must be at least thirteen years of age, and must be able to produce testimonials proving some aptitude for music.

The Swedish Chief Lodge of Good Templars have four bursaries of 150 kronor (£7. 10s.), and in a few necessitous cases free tuition has been given.

In 1936-7 there were 54 pupils: 21 of these learnt the violin alone, 5 the 'cello only, 2 the viola, 1 the guitar, 16 the piano, 1 combined the 'cello and the piano, 3 the violin and 'cello, 1 the piano and guitar, 1 the violin and piano, 1 the double-bass and violin, 1 the guitar and 'cello, and 1 learnt to play the 'cello and the clarinet. Great interest was shown throughout the course in folk music and the conductor of the orchestra arranged some folk tunes for two or three stringed instruments.

Concerts given in the School and in neighbouring halls are of great importance. The centenary of Beethoven's death was celebrated by a special memorial concert and the fine School Hall was filled 'to the last place'.

The School is maintained financially year by year through the gifts of generous donors in addition to the comparatively small State grant.

This experiment of a People's Music School run in connection with a People's College is unique in Sweden and, so far as the writer knows, unique to Sweden.

CHAPTER VIII

BIRKAGÅRDEN: A NON-RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE

Birkagården People's College in Stockholm was established by the local organization of the W.E.A. and the Foundation of Birkagården. Each of these two organizations chooses three members and two deputies for the College Board of Governors. The six members thus chosen themselves elect a seventh and his deputy. The College Principal is an *ex officio* member.

There are two parts to the College: a day school and an evening school. In the former work is pursued along the lines general to all *folkhögskolor*, in the latter work is done in study circles. Since 1926 there has also been a women's course for eight weeks in the summer at Marholm in the Archipelago.

In the winter session there is only the first-year course for men and women held from November to May with sixteen days' holiday at Christmas. The day school session is from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., including the lunch hour. The curriculum comprises Swedish, Swedish history, literature, religious history, national economy, civics, modern history, geology, psychology and ethics, hygiene, arithmetic, chemistry, English (optional), singing, gymnastics (including a special course of breathing exercises), and the history of art with visits to the excellent collections in the National and Nordiska Museums.

The evening school, open from September to May, begins at 7.30 p.m. and ends at 10 p.m. It provides a syllabus of general studies such as art, modern history and geology, of school studies like mathematics and book-keeping, and a large choice of foreign languages. Gymnastics and handwork are also included. In 1936 there was a special course for German immigrants. The total number of students in the thirty-eight study circles in 1936 was about 700. Once a month the evening school students are

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invited to a social by the Students' Association and the study circles also organize various socials, independently and jointly.

Birkagården College pupils, married and single, come naturally from every class and from all types of work from bus-conducting to photography. The city of Stockholm awards a number of scholarships to sons and daughters of residents, and for others there are several bursary funds which help, as well as the State scholarships.

General lectures on a variety of topics together with school journeys and an annual visit to the neighbouring residential college at Jakobsberg vary the College routine. The students have the advantage of a wide choice of eminent lecturers resident in or visiting Stockholm and the wealth of the city's buildings and exhibits to draw upon.

At the summer course for about thirty students the daily routine follows very much that which has been described in Chapter IV. Handwork, games, swimming and life-saving, folk-dancing and music all play a prominent part.

The cost of maintaining the College in its winter courses averages about 44,000 kronor (£2,200) a year and the summer course at Marholm costs 8,000 kronor (approximately £400).

The most interesting feature of the *folkhögskola* is its participation in the great work of the educational settlement known as Birkagården, which runs on lines similar in many respects to the Cambridge Village Communities or to the Citizen Centres suggested in the recent pamphlet issued by the Educational Settlements Association, but its buildings are not all centralized.

Under the leadership of the now famous Dr. Nataniel Beskow, Birkagården has innumerable activities and has thrown out tentacles over Stockholm since its inception in 1911. Among these activities are two nursery schools, one for toddlers aged 1-3 years, the other for children of 4-7. It is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and three meals are provided for the children. Parents pay according to their means but the maximum is 1 krona a day (1s.). There are also four children's play-gardens (*barnträdgårdar*) in two different districts of Stockholm open in the

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mornings, accommodating from forty to sixty children; one of these is set apart for delicate children. The charge for keeping a child at one is between 2 kronor (2s.) and 10 kronor a month and a number of poorer children are kept free of charge. Here they can play and work together under special care and in pleasant surroundings. One five-year-old summed up the atmosphere in this remark to her mother, 'You see in Birkagården it is so pleasant that it isn't a bit difficult to be nice'; another rebuked a younger playmate for saying 'I can't' with the words 'Don't you know that no one ever says can't in the play-garden? We try and it comes.'

A Sunday school for children of 5 to 13 is very popular. 'After-lunch homes' (eftermiddaghemmen), one for boys and the other for girls and younger boys, are open daily from 12.30 to 6 p.m., and provide all kinds of occupation: handwork, sewing, drawing, games; there, too, homework can be done. The charge for those who take their evening meal there is 4:50 kronor (4s. 6d.) a month, for those who have only chocolate 2 kronor.

Then there are a great many clubs or ringar, meeting one or two afternoons each week for instruction and practice in wood-work, raffia work, sewing, eurhythms. There is a lending library and a library evening for all.

Summer camps (sommarkolonier) are arranged from June to August or September, and accommodate between ten and thirty children in their age groups at a time.

For young girls and boys there are several clubs for music or gymnastics, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and all these are run by leaders in collaboration with Birkagården's Principal and his deputy. Debates, conferences, hikes, lectures are all part of the general meeting-ground of these clubs.

Then there are groups for older people. 'Family evenings' open to all ages are arranged every Saturday with programmes of music, lantern lectures and dramatic entertainments. On some evenings the Marholm students or the People's College pupils provide the programme. The subjects of the lectures given by visitors or by the College staff are very varied: English

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industrial legislation, Stockholm's development since 1700, Masaryk's life, modern Swedish lyrics, were amongst the topics for the session 1936-7. In December 1937 I had the pleasure of giving a lantern lecture on England to a mixed audience of men and women, who were able to follow the English. Evenings for the mothers of children in the nurseries, study circles on religion and the problems of life, parents' associations and an agency for women's work, especially in domestic service, all flourish under the wing of Birkagården, which also provides a meeting-ground for students of other nationalities.

There is a large kitchen, and here much of the work is done by volunteers known as 'medarbetare' (fellow-workers) from all the various groups in the settlement. These offer certain specific hours of their time to this or other necessary work, some with pay, others without. In 1936-7 there were 125 medarbetare. 'Hospitanter' are young girls who want to get practical experience in various aspects of social work in most cases in preparation for study at Social Institutet or Social Pedagogiska Seminariet in Stockholm. In 1936 there were thirty-six of these. Special lectures, as well as practical work, are held for them. In voluntary Bible study, daily prayers in a small loft room and religious discussion groups, they join up with the medarbetare. Also reckoned as medarbetare are all who help the settlement as lecturers, music-makers, doctors, nurses and the house-mothers who open their homes to the children at camping time.

This great family, with its People's College in the centre, may well be a type of settlement which England should develop after the war, especially in the large towns. We hope they will, however, be built on the same foundation and towards the same high ends. 'Birkagården will offer to people from various kinds of work and social classes the opportunity to meet as equals and to share with one another of their own experience of life. Birkagården will, without standing upon any special confession of faith, work for personal and social Christianity in the spirit of the Gospels.'¹

¹ The motto of Birkagården.

CHAPTER IX

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGES

It is to be hoped that from the descriptions given in these seven chapters some impression of the value of this educational experiment is already clear to the reader. It remains to summarize those values, to suggest certain difficulties and dangers which have to be met or avoided, to point out the particular relevance of some factors to our present discussions in England on the development of adult education, and finally to indicate the place of the People's College in the post-war reconstruction of Europe for which the Allied Nations will be responsible.

In assessing the value of this type of education we should place high the external influences working upon a student in a residential college—fluence of buildings, gardens and countryside, which are especially important in the case of students from industrial and crowded areas. In this respect it is interesting to note how few of the People's Colleges are non-resident or situated in towns.

It is not difficult for people who have had some boarding-school or residential college experience or other well-organized community living, to appreciate the value of residence:¹ first, in the absence of distraction (no bus or train catching, no continual readjustment to two different atmospheres of home and school, or work and school, which makes so obvious a drain,

¹ 'In particular, there will need to be developed appropriate centres, including a number of residential colleges, which will not only provide the educational courses which the adult population may need, but will add to them the value associated with the life of a corporate institution.' Recommendation from the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction of July 1943.

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for example, on the energies of many of our secondary-school boys and girls); secondly, in the rubbing off of corners, mental and moral, in the daily life of a community, in learning to live well with others who do not necessarily put one's own interest first, as in family life one naturally expects; thirdly, in the stimulus of the daily life and hourly contact in other places than in the lecture-room with the teachers and lecturers; and lastly, in the practical experience of work for the college in house or grounds combining the healthy variety of manual and academic work.

Out of such things as these arise the growth of mutual knowledge and trust and the gradual breaking down of social barriers, if the colleges are kept well mixed in personnel.¹ We English people are still apt to trust only those who have much the same upbringing as ourselves. I myself would naturally expect my doctor, my lawyer, my bank manager, to give me a square deal and a truthful account of a situation; I should expect myself to give a long enough notice of change of plan to a professional person, and should expect the same consideration in return: but, like hundreds of others, I have found in teaching and employing people with a different upbringing and education that the same loyalty does not very often yet exist. 'All's fair in war' seems to be the accepted attitude when dealing with one's employers, though not when dealing with one's equals: and that decision as to where loyalty ceases to be imperative evidently constitutes one of the greatest barriers between the classes. The possibility of the growth of mutual know-

¹ The following extract from a letter sent to me by an ex-pupil of Sigtuna bears witness to the good mixing which I personally noticed in all the colleges. 'I spent the winter of 1931-2 in Sigtuna. This was a winter of economic crisis and the majority of the male students were unemployed workers. Many of the girls had "General Schools' Certificates" behind them and came from good homes, but we all mixed extremely well and there was no class distinction whatsoever. It may be that this condition was a bit self-conscious in the first place, but it soon ceased to be so, and we all realized how much we had to learn from each other.' 14 July 1943.

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ledge, and thence of mutual trust, so that we may all think and speak the same language, is one of the great advantages of the mixed People's College. Each section of the community still remains loyal to itself; but democracy calls for a loyalty yet wider.

Another striking advantage of the People's Colleges, these 'schools for life', is that of relating academic studies to practical experience. 'Education is a handmaid of the art of living', Sir Richard Livingstone has written, and it is this conception of education which the People's Colleges in Sweden have demonstrated and justified far more than any other type of elementary, secondary, or adult school. The real relation of learning to living can only be apprehended at the stage of adult education, when the student has already had some experience of life outside and beyond the shelter of home, in the struggle for a livelihood and in the turmoil of industrial and agricultural competition, and in the awakening of his own physical, moral and spiritual faculties.

The People's Colleges have from the beginning in Sweden also been free from the stigma of educating their students out of their occupational place in the community. It was expressly stated by the founders of Hvilan Folkhögskola that they had in mind 'a place of instruction where the young could not only develop their physical powers and improve their minds, but also their souls, and infuse into their daily life the higher aspirations, and learn that in the less luminous positions good and far-reaching work for the community lay to hand'. So have they taught the true perspective, the value of a man's work to the community, and the effective place he may take in the religious, social and civic life of his locality, however humble his work, if he develops his personality and capacities.

And lastly, the People's Colleges were born at a time when religion and idealism were in danger of being choked out of existence by the cropping up of so many other tares of distraction, and when people were becoming more afraid of the entire loss of all spiritual values than of the pre-eminence of one par-

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ticular religious sect; and so they have not been afraid to take a stand on a really spiritual and, in some cases, specifically religious basis, and thereby to give point and vision in all the scattered and disintegrated living and thinking of modern youth.

Such then are some of the chief advantages of this type of adult education. What dangers and difficulties are there to meet or avoid?

First, perhaps, is the opposite side of the idealistic spiritual basis of the colleges. It is easy, as soon as one leaves behind hard facts, to become vague: it would be possible quickly to become sentimental. But the Swede does not become sentimental quickly—there is a very hard core of realism in his make-up—and one doubts whether English people would fall very easily into this possible trap.

Secondly, in the very breadth of the curriculum and syllabus lies great danger, the danger of superficiality, of giving the student a smattering of so many things that he either becomes a know-all or gets mental indigestion. For example, some of the products of certain types of adult education all the world over are disposed to think that six months spent at a training college qualifies them to lay down the law on all subjects under the sun to men who have spent a lifetime in learning. The avoidance of this danger lies chiefly in the hands of the teacher, and the right type of teacher is probably a greater necessity to this kind of school than to any other, since his freedom is so great and the checks on him are so few. The humility of the teacher in respect of his own knowledge and its relation to all that can be known is in itself a valuable corrective.

A third difficulty is the gap between the primary school and the People's College, and the problem of linking up the folkskola (primary school) with the folkhögskola (people's college) was one which was foremost in discussion when I was in Sweden. The Higher Primary School (a superstructure of the primary school, with a free course covering one, two, three or four years) or the continuation school which a fourteen-year-old must attend for two or three years part-time if he is not

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGES attending another educational institution, do something in Sweden to bridge the gap, and the W.E.A. and Co-operative courses do probably more, but there remains a problem to be solved, as there will also be in England.

It would not perhaps be out of place to quote here the conclusions reached by a Danish inspector on this very point as early as 1883 when continuation schools and adult classes were unable to bridge the gap: 'I know how quickly an energetic and gifted person from eighteen to twenty years of age, with a desire for learning, can make good the difference between elementary and secondary education.' The experience of Holger Begtrup, himself the principal of a Danish People's College, is that 'the same amount of information which it takes the half-grown youth dozing on the school forms three to five years to learn, can be acquired by adults who are keen on learning and who have done practical work, in the space of three to five months'.¹

Further, what is the relevance of this experiment to England? Some points in the answer to this question have already been made throughout the book, but a few additional suggestions must be given now.

We have in England ten residential adult colleges which partly owe their inspiration to Scandinavia. Fircroft, near Birmingham, was founded in 1908 by Tom Bryan, who had seen the Danish High Schools in action. Newbattle Abbey, in Scotland, was given in 1937 by Lord Lothian for a college after his visit to Sigtuna. Mostly the English colleges have branched out on special lines and have a distinctive outlook. For example, Avoncroft College in Worcestershire is for rural workers, and though history, English literature, and economics, are studied, the emphasis is on the science and practice of agriculture, while scholarships are awarded to agricultural labourers and others, and grants-in-aid are given for the College by the Ministry of Agriculture: therefore it resembles rather a Lantmannaskola

¹ Quoted by Begtrup, Manniche and Lund, *The Folk High Schools of Denmark and the Development of a Farming Community*, pp. 38 and 132.

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(agricultural school) in Sweden. Coleg Harlech, founded in 1927 in North Wales, resembles a Swedish People's College more in its aim 'to enlarge the vision of its students, to develop their latent capacities for leadership and service, to stimulate their mental and spiritual growth', and in the provision of a wider curriculum and the place given to literature, art and music. It differs in two essential respects: first that the student in a one-year course selects only three of the large number of subjects offered, viz. Economic history, Welsh history, Welsh literature, English literature, history of Philosophy, logic, Psychology, political science, economics, music, art, and handicrafts, history of science; secondly, although it has pupils from England, the Dominions, and other countries, the emphasis is naturally upon all things Welsh, and at a time of Welsh economic depression it has done much to strengthen and revive the national life and its expression in song and literature. Fircroft College offers a syllabus similar to Brunnsvik, but here again students must concentrate on one of the courses. At Newbattle Abbey studies are also selective, only one of the three groups offered (philosophy and psychology, economics and politics, literature) being usually studied by a pupil in a thirty-three weeks' session; general lecture-discussions, 'questions of the day', and visiting lecturers speaking on science, art and geography, are part of the programme, but the main aim of the course is much more specialized than in Sweden. Woodbrooke, one of the Selly Oak Colleges, was founded in 1903 by the Society of Friends, and specializes in religious studies, international relations, and preparation for the Social Science diploma of Birmingham University. Ruskin College, the oldest, provides a two-year course preparing students for an examination in the University of Oxford, usually the diploma in Economic and Political Science or in Public and Social Administration; one-year courses can also be taken, and the subjects for these include economics, economic history, social and political history, English grammar and composition, English literature, public speaking, economic geography, political theory and

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foreign languages. The Catholic Workers' College can, like Ruskin College, prepare students for the University of Oxford Diploma in Economic and Political Science, and for the rest emphasizes the study of religious and allied subjects, tuition being given by university teachers. Hillcroft College, Surrey, founded in 1920 by professional women for women workers, offers a wide course which includes economics, government in theory and practice (international, central and local), Biblical history and literature, history, psychology, philosophy, biology, and public speaking and committee procedure; like Swedish colleges it also gives a fair allocation of time to handicrafts, household administration, music and dancing. A pupil can specialize if she wishes, but the general course is the more usual. The Co-operative College at Manchester was founded mainly for the study of co-operation and kindred subjects, and Holybrook House, Reading, offers very short courses of four weeks each to train students for work in the Adult Education movement. Nearly all these colleges offer studies of a more advanced, specialized and academic type than those usually obtaining in Sweden.

These are undoubtedly making a beginning in the great work of residential adult education, some in very beautiful buildings and surroundings, notably Newbattle Abbey and Harlech; but it is only a beginning, and one which has been seriously interrupted by the war and temporary requisitioning of premises—for example, the R.A.M.C. have taken over Newbattle Abbey. Even in peacetime, however, they affect only some 300 students in a population of forty million. We need, therefore, first of all many more colleges, and many more offering a course of study of a wide and general type for students of less advanced capacities, as provided in Sweden.

Secondly, we need to learn more from Sweden of the necessity for generous State and County Council help. The County Councils have been recommended by the Board of Education to give 'favourable consideration to the policy of aiding, by way of scholarships or otherwise as they may think fit, students

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who wish to take advantage of the further education provided by Residential Colleges recognized by the Board of Education or the Ministry of Agriculture, and are deemed by the authorities likely to profit thereby. Such aid should, however, be given only in cases where the courses of study are free from party bias and any flavour of political propaganda.¹ For all that it remains that grants from public funds, which started in 1919, are still relatively small. The statistics given by the Educational Settlements Association in their pamphlet published in 1943 and entitled *People's Colleges*, show that the annual cost per student for board and tuition ranges between £135 and £165 and the average income from public funds, local and central, lies between £25 and £48. 'Scholarships and bursaries have not been a regular provision from local education authorities: they have been few in number, insufficiently publicized and generally inadequate in amount. This in times which have been increasingly difficult for any institution relying in whole or in large part upon funds raised by voluntary effort.'² Possibly the County Councils will do more to help when colleges are founded which have a closer link with their locality and with the county, as in Sweden.

Then too we might learn something from the Swedish experiment on the matter of cost—the cost both of founding and maintaining colleges, and the cost of living to the students. Granted a slightly cheaper rate of living in Sweden, it still remains striking that the figures given already in the budgets at the end of Chapter III for maintaining the colleges, in Chapter II for founding them, and in Chapter IV for living in them, are comparatively low. Let us contrast: the expenditure for the

¹ Education Advisory Sub-Committee of the County Councils Association, 30 October 1935. Coleg Harlech, the Catholic Workers' College, Fircroft, and Ruskin College, are recognized by the Board of Education, Avoncroft by the Ministry of Agriculture, and Newbattle Abbey by the Scottish Education Department, and are open to government inspection.

² *People's Colleges for Residential Adult Education*, p. 23.

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year 1936-7 at Sigtuna was 70,443 kronor (that is, roughly speaking, £3,522); at Hola, 1936-7, it was 93,205 kronor (£4,660); whereas 'a reasonable estimate of the total annual expenditure of a single college in occupation the whole year round would be in the neighbourhood of £6,000 to £8,000'¹ in England.

In the matter of cost to the students there is a wide and striking difference between the charge for a course, let us say,

at Arvika of approximately £13 for five months,
at Sigtuna of approximately £26-30 for five months,
and at Coleg Harlech of £75 for eight months,
and at Newbattle Abbey of £100 for eight months.

It is true of the Swedish People's Colleges as it has been written of the Danish, that they have striven to 'unite plain customs and a simple frugal life with a genuine culture of the mind and heart', and an English observer did not get the impression that they were any less good for that reason.

When I visited Newbattle Abbey in the autumn of 1938, Dr. Fraser, the warden, stressed the fact that one of the chief difficulties in the way of enrolling students is the economic one, that the student surrenders his job temporarily, and is in danger of losing it permanently. To quote again from the pamphlet of the Educational Settlements Association,² 'This has been an even more effective deterrent to expansion. Far from there having been any recognized and accepted national scheme for the release of potential students from their employment to take up courses of study, employers generally have been reluctant in the extreme to make such a concession. The great majority of students have had to resign from their posts, run the risk of not being reinstated—or even of being unable to find any employment on their return to occupational life—and use their savings to pay the college fees. . . . It is hardly an exaggeration to say

¹ *People's Colleges*, published by the Educational Settlements Association, p. 23.

² p. 16.

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that almost every enrolment has been an act of courage and faith.'

No doubt in England many employers have already taken the attitude that this form of adult education will create a body of 'self-important people too good for their job in their own eyes', and they may be slow to recognize what many of their colleagues in Sweden have had to acknowledge as a fact, that if you educate the worker properly (and much depends on the word properly) you draw out more interest in his work and put it on a higher plane.

It has been said by the Danish folk high school leaders: 'We wish our pupils to return to their farms, craft, or trade from which they come, and that they shall do their work with an undaunted spirit and a brighter intelligence as a result of their attendance at our schools.'¹ If the Scandinavian employers have had to recognize this as a fact and possibility, why not the English? And if so there is then only the practical problem of substitute labour to reckon with, which should be possible in a country which has been battling with large unemployment figures even in the professions and skilled crafts for many years. In Sweden the difficulty is often overcome by the worker going to a People's College immediately after his military service at twenty years of age, and before returning to his job. Also in the case of farm workers there is less difficulty if they choose a winter course when there is a slack time on the land.

Although the few who have made the venture in England have testified to its immense value and satisfaction and have 'almost invariably stressed the fact that they represented only the merest fraction of the men and women who would avail themselves of such education if the ways and means for it could be found',² yet some who have had the experience of living in both countries have wondered whether one of the biggest contrasts between the situation in Sweden and in England is not

¹ Begtrup, p. 133.

² *People's Colleges*, Educational Settlements Association pamphlet.

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the comparative attitude of the workers, both peasant and artisan, to further education.¹ Whether the extra keenness both to know and to adapt knowledge to living which the observer notices so much in Sweden is due already to the influence of seventy years' residential adult education is difficult to say: it may be so, but the fact remains.

Since returning from Sweden I have tried in my own small North-country village and its neighbourhood to test some of the reactions of ordinary villagers to further education, and especially to this idea of residential adult colleges. In lecturing on the subject I have found a lukewarm interest as yet for the scheme amongst the people who have the greatest need of it—the better educated are the more keen—and in contact with girls in class and club I have found little inclination for any activity outside the range of dress and dance. In a lecture-discussion class which I started in my own house on Sunday afternoons on the lives of great people from St. Francis to Francis Xavier and Livingstone and Edward Wilson of the Scott expedition among men, and Florence Nightingale, Mary Slesser and Helen Keller among women, the material, fitted to different types of intelligence and interest, with which I have been able previously to thrill the secondary and high-school girl, fell like lead upon those who had not reached that standard or who had left school at the earliest possible opportunity. Certainly, classes and activities for girls on their own are not popular, and nothing voluntary which is not co-educational has much chance of success. The chance of support and success for the People's Colleges lies in keeping them residential and co-educational.

Lastly, in regard to the pertinence of this residential adult educational experiment to post-war reconstruction, Mr. Henry Wallace, Vice-President of the United States, in an address

¹ This fear receives some corroboration from a letter, recently published in the *Yorkshire Post*, which concluded, 'I am all for higher education for those who desire it, but what is the good of compelling 75 per cent of our children to attend schools and classes when they don't want it?'

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given to the Connecticut College of Women, and outlined in the English press, said that he was a great believer in the folk high school and in the Scandinavian systems of co-operation, and that he believed they were well adapted to the German situation once militarism and totalitarianism are stamped out: before the war there were already People's Colleges of the Scandinavian type which were making headway among the freer and more liberal elements, showing that they can take root on German soil.

One can readily see clear advantages in this suggestion of Mr. Wallace. First, we shall be dealing in Germany with a large mass of uneducated or part-time educated or even miseducated adolescent boys, for example, whose paltry education has been interrupted by militaristic training, or who at sixteen have already been combatants: and here the People's College should be able to play an important part, being economical, generally educative and interesting. For what German youth will willingly go to school again, after facing the grim realism of sharing with grown men the horrors of modern war? But there may well have to be an interim period first in which a discipline stronger than that of a people's high school may prepare the way for the greater freedom of a co-educational college. German youth will surely also benefit by a period of residential community life, while the gaps and wounds caused by the State in which 'the brother delivers up the brother to death . . . and a man's foes are those of his own household' are being salved by kindly years of peace.

It is possible also that the People's College may have an important role to play in catering for the needs of the many demobilized sailors and soldiers and airmen who will feel the need for a time of recovery and possibly of peace after the battering and shattering of war, a place where, with others, they can reshape and review their aim and purpose and philosophy of life, and at the same time start gradually and by easy stages to settle again to normal work and study along the lines or according to the interests which they pursued until war inter-

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rupted them. So many of those men and women who returned after 1918 to the universities admitted that they found themselves out of harmony, too restless or too out of touch for the academic studies, too old or war-weary for contact with young undergraduate life.

It is to be hoped that the term 'young people's colleges' in the White Paper just issued by the Board of Education (July 1943), and containing the proposed new educational reforms, will not lead to confusion with this scheme of adult education. The essence of the scheme described in this book is that it shall be reserved for an age when the pupil has already had some first-hand experience of life and of working for a livelihood, that it shall be entirely voluntary and generally residential (a year or half-year in surroundings apart and away from work), and not a continuation school (no doubt valuable as a preparation for this) which boys and girls in their mid-teens *must* attend.

Having taught at various times children between the ages of four and nineteen, in other people's schools and my own, I should be the last to imagine that any one system or type of education holds the key to Utopia, nor would I suggest that every pupil benefits from his stay at a people's college. So much depends on the original aim and attitude: there are bound to be some here and there who go for no special reason, or for a holiday, or to be free, and you cannot judge the movement from one or two products any more than you can judge a university from individual graduates. But it remains a self-evident fact that the Scandinavian countries have been able in the last century to show the world examples of fully practising and smoothly working democracies, and Sweden is still able to do so. That there is some real connection between the extent of their democracy and the development of adult education is not doubted by observers on the spot: and the moral is that we in England should give more time and thought comparatively to the subject, more facilities and money to this satisfactory form of it, and a larger section of attention and comment in every future White Paper.

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'Without provision for adult education the national system must be incomplete and it has well been said that the measure of the effectiveness of earlier education is the extent to which in some form or other it is continued in later life', is acknowledged by the recent White Paper, and yet, in its financial section, 'the development of technical and adult education (lumped together!) is not included among the matters to be dealt with in the four-year plan', and furthermore no specific proposals are made for it at the end of the four years. While it is also recognized that the Army Bureau of Current Affairs and other wartime developments, including the C.E.M.A. (Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts) have done much to stimulate interest, inquiry and discussion, yet these developments are apparently to be allowed to go to waste for lack of provision after the war.

In a letter to *The Times*, Wednesday, 28th July 1943, Sir Richard Livingstone pointed out that 80 per cent of our population have left and are leaving school at fourteen (and even one year more when it comes will not make a vast and immediate difference) and 'these men and women who have left school at fourteen will be the majority of the electorate during the next thirty years—one of the most critical periods of our history. The only way of repairing the hopeless inadequacy of what we have done for them is through adult education. . . . Let provision be made for adult education from the first. Then the country will have even more reason to be grateful to Mr. Butler for a great design.'

